



UNIVERSITY OF  
LIVERPOOL

MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY:

THE NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY TODAY

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements  
of the University of Liverpool for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

By

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DECEMBER, 2019

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## Declaration

This thesis titled 'Media Management and Disruptive Technology: The Nigerian Newspaper Industry Today' presents my original research work. It has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award. This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD. The views expressed in this thesis are mine. Therefore, this thesis is a product of my own independent investigation, except where otherwise stated. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions. I hereby give consent for my thesis to be made available to interested parties.



**Nelson Obinna Omenugha**

December, 2019

## Abstract

New media technologies have brought about radical changes in the contemporary mass communication landscape. An important aspect of these changes which is currently provoking much interest concerns how these technologies are redefining and disrupting the operations, ethos and tastes of the old media, thus challenging the future of the traditional media institution. The Nigerian newspaper industry, like others elsewhere, is caught up in this new reality as new media technologies and the attendant alternative news sources increasingly gain footing in the country. This study, therefore, examines how newspaper managers in Nigeria, to secure their future in the new dispensation, have been responding to these urgent challenges posed by new media technologies. The research is anchored within various theories: Technological Determinism (TD), Disruptive Technology (DT), Diffusion of Innovation and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and puts forward the “Techno-Human Dynamism” model, as it seeks answer to the main research question: What are the observable trends in the management of Nigerian newspapers at a time when new media technologies are posing a challenge to the survival of traditional newspapers? Adopting a mixed qualitative research approach - Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD), the study focuses on four major Nigerian daily newspapers - *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Trust* and *The Daily Times* - as well as the newspaper readers of these daily newspapers. Three managerial personnel of each of the selected newspapers were interviewed, while Focus Group Discussion (FGD) of four sessions comprising six discussants each were conducted among newspaper readers in each of four purposively selected cities -

Aroma junction (Awka, Anambra), Ojota junction (Ikeja, Lagos), Sky Memorial junction (Wuse, Abuja) and Rumukoro junction (Port Harcourt, Rivers) - across the country. Employing the thematic method of data analysis, the study found that Nigerian newspapers, like their counterparts elsewhere, are already experiencing the disruptive impact of new media technologies in all major areas of their operations including content, human resources and revenue. These disruptive impacts appear to be strengthening rather than merely weakening the newspaper organisations. The newspapers in response to them have become more creative, more ethical - volatising factual, accurate, investigative and analytical reporting. These are issues that had hitherto posed huge ethical concerns about Nigerian journalism. Moreover, the hybridization (integration) of the new and old media as one of the coping strategies seems to add further strength to the newspapers as they poach on the strengths of the new media to complement the weaknesses of the old. However, the newspaper managers still have some latitude to secure the future of the industry given the untapped potential of the industry both in the traditional and online sense. The study recommended that Nigerian newspapers should endeavour to keep pace with the technological innovations driving today's newspaper industry while boldly considering other response strategies that have worked elsewhere - including journalistic co-operatives, mergers and conglomeration - towards arresting the dwindling fortunes of the industry.

## Dedication

This thesis is a product of grace and generous benevolence undeservedly received from God through the instrument of my parents - Dr Michael and Prof Kate Omenugha as well as my benefactors. These are people who made my dream of a PhD come true. I am deeply grateful and dedicate this thesis to them.

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## Publications and Academic Presentations within Research

### Interest

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2018, 'Rethinking Nigeria media ownership in a globalized era: The economic perspective' (2018) presented at the 2nd international conference on 'Ownership structures and managerial challenges in the African media and telecommunication sectors' organized by and held at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Enterprise Institute, Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland on 8th and 9th November, 2018.

2018, 'The impact of e-marketing tools on the growth of Nigerian entertainment and media (E&M) industry: possibilities and challenges' (2018) presented at the International Conference on Digital Marketing held on 18th may, 2018 at Galle Face Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka by Global Academic Research Institute.

\*These are some research efforts made by the researcher during the period of his doctoral studies in an attempt to advance his research skills and prepare himself for the viva.

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## List of Abbreviations and Meanings

**ACB:** Africa Continental Bank.

**ADVAN:** Advertisers' Association of Nigeria.

**AFRINICA:** African Network Information Centre.

**AG:** Action Group.

**APC:** All People's Congress.

**ASNs:** Autonomous Systems Numbers.

**BBC:** British Broadcasting Corporation.

**DE:** Daily Editor; interchangeably used with editor.

**DI:** Disruptive Innovation.

**DT:** Disruptive Technology.

**EDM/MM:** Executive Director Marketing/Marketing Manager.

**EDP/PM:** Executive Director Publishing/Production Manager.

**FGD:** Focus Group Discussion.

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product.

**GSM:** Global System on Mobile.

**ICTs:** Information and Communications Technologies.

**IP:** Internet Protocol.

**IPOB:** Indigenous People of Biafra.

**ISPs:** Internet Service Providers.

**KII:** Key Informant Interview.

**MASSOB:** Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra.

**MD/E-in-C:** Managing Director/ Editor-in-Chief.

**NADECO:** National Democratic Coalition.

**NB:** National Bank.

**NBS:** National Bureau of Statistics.

**NC:** North-Central.

**NCC:** Nigerian Communications Commission.

**NCNC:** National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons.

**NITEL:** Nigeria Telecommunications Limited.

**NE:** North-East.

**NGE:** Nigerian Guild of Editors.

**NNPC:** Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

**NPAN:** Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria.

**NPC:** Northern People's Congress.

**NPN:** National Party of Nigeria.

**NW:** North-West.

**NYM:** National Youth Movement.

**SE:** South-East.

**SEd:** Sub-editor.

**SLPP:** Sierra Leone People's Party.

**SMS:** Short Message Service.

**SS:** South-South.

**SW:** South-West.

**TC:** Technology Constructivism.

**TD:** Technological Determinism.

**UPN:** Unity Party of Nigeria.

**UPP:** United Progressive Party.

**VPN:** Virtual Private Networks.

**WAI:** War Against Indiscipline.

**WNTV:** Western Nigeria Television.

**WNBS:** Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service.

## Keywords

Globalization, Nigeria, New Media, Disruptive Technologies, Technology Determinism, Newspaper, Media Management, Media Manager, Media Audience, *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Times* and *The Daily Trust*.

## Definition of Key Operational Terms

**Nigeria:** One of the sovereign countries located in the region of West Africa; culturally made up of Northern and Southern regions. Since independence in 1960, the country has undergone 33 years of military regime as well as 30 months of civil war. The newspaper played a role in shaping the country through its activities in pre and post-independence eras; including the return to Democracy on May 29, 1999.

**New Media:** Digital and interactive forms of information and communication exchanges.

**New Media Technologies:** Internet-based technologies that drive digital, interactive, manipulative, dense, compressible and networkable platforms and tools such as social networking sites, mobile computing device (like smartphone); streaming audio and video gadgets (e.g. digital camera); email services, websites, blogs, mobile apps and virtual worlds. This study interchangeably uses new media and new media technologies.

**Newspaper:** A form of print media with periodic publication of written information covering several activities in various fields. This study uses newspaper to imply the traditional hard copy newspaper.

**National Dailies:** Nigeria Newspapers which have national outlooks in terms of enjoying wide readership and strong influence in both the Southern and Northern regions of Nigeria. This study focuses on: *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Times* and *Daily Trust*.

**Disruptive:** Illustrates the change and challenge (whether of innovating, transforming or stabilizing nature) occurring as a result of the activities of new technologies and/or new thinking.

**Disruptive technologies:** Those digital computing and interactive devices and platforms that unsettle, change and challenge (irrespective of whether the challenge is innovative, transformative, or stabilizing) the conventional and the routine media of communication. They present both challenges to and opportunities for the traditional or legacy media depending on the variables at play in the particular context within which these media operate.

**Media Management:** The responsibilities to make decisions, initiate ideas, plan, organize, staff, lead, direct and supervise the activities of a media organization to accomplish set goals of producing and circulating content as well as maintaining and growing audience base and revenue.

**Media Manager:** Refers to staff of media organizations who are involved in the process of coordinating and taking decisions on the administrative, editorial and business dimensions of media practice. In this study, and in this regard, the focus is on interviews with Managing Directors/Editors-in-chief (representing the administrative with editorial aspect), a Daily Editor (representing the editorial aspect) and a Head of Marketing (representing the business aspect).

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis. It provides the framework for outlining, discussing and understanding the phenomena the study intends to unpack, thus setting out the content of the study. It contains nine (9) sections namely: background analysis, rationale for the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and theoretical consideration. This chapter also provides the distinction between the traditional newspaper (hardcopy publication) and new media (online publication). It further conceptualizes disruptive technology.

### Section 1.1 Background Analysis

Mass media in Africa, like in other countries, have undergone tremendous changes in the last few decades as a result of progressive and far-reaching changes in the technological, political, economic and cultural global landscapes. The global revolution in information and communications technologies (ICTs) of course also touched Africa and has had a significant transformative effect on the media landscape there (Duarte, 2009; Mdlongwa, 2009). Before, this mediascape was dominated exclusively by the traditional media – broadly defined as the older, non-interactive, less participatory and less flexible mass communication platforms, chiefly radio, TV and print – while the advent of the new media was and is seen as having a drastic effect on this conventional class of media (Gwajinka, 2003; Ezeibe & Nwagwu, 2009; Agboola, 2014).

With reference to journalism, Pavlik (2001) captures the urgent nature of this new reality thus:

Journalism is undergoing a fundamental transformation, perhaps the most fundamental since the rise of the penny press of the mid nineteenth century. In the twilight of the twentieth century and the dawn of the twenty-first, there is an emerging new form of journalism whose distinguishing qualities include ubiquitous news, global information access, instantaneous reporting, interactivity, multimedia content, and extreme content customization [...] (Pp.x1)

In Nigeria, this new era is characterised by the increasing emergence of blog sites and exclusively online-based news organizations (Abati, 2014; Adetusi, 2015); this in a country where Internet penetration has grown considerably and is increasing by the day such that as on June 30 2017, Internet users in Nigeria numbered 91,598,757 representing 47.7% of the population (Internet World Stat, 2017). The world over, this trend ultimately represents a new epoch in the sphere of mass communication as, among other implications, it means the entry of disruptive technologies into the media landscape (Duarte, 2009; Mdlongwa, 2009; Kebbel, 2014). A crucial question is what happens to old media structures as a result of disruptive technologies (Kebbel, 2014; Adetusi, 2015). Scholars such as Duarte (2009) and Mdlongwa (2009) have more directly put the question this way: will the new media ultimately displace the old (traditional) media or will the two survive side-by-side?

For the print, the question has been whether hardcopy newspapers and magazines will survive the arrival of online publications. While some (Blake, 2013 and Amuka,

2015) have argued that the new media will ultimately displace traditional print media, others (Agboola, 2014; Egbochukwu, 2013) have contended that it will in fact strengthen it. The former argument has in the main been based on the belief that the new media offer everything obtainable in the conventional hardcopy newspaper in a more flexible and dynamic manner. In other words, the new media have all it takes to cater to the gratification people seek in a hardcopy newspaper (such as information and entertainment) and even more; hence new media are well on course to supplant the old order (Kebbel, 2014).

On the other hand, the argument against displacement of the hardcopy by the digital copy hinges on the belief that some of the seemingly disruptive features of the new media will, rather than displace the old media, complement them (Egbochukwu, 2013; McQuail, 2010). Again, it has also been argued that the history of the evolution of mass communication has shown that the arrival of new technologies does not necessarily mean the death of the old ones. For instance, the advent of television which, it was feared at the time, would displace radio just as it had been feared that the emergence of the electronic media in general was to mark the end of print (McQuail, 2010).

However, notwithstanding the merits of both positions, it will appear too presumptuous to assume outright that the arrival of the new media does not in any way present a disruptive threat to the conventional print media. In fact, statistics tend to suggest that the penetration of the new media is taking its toll on the traditional media, particularly the print media. Recent data from the Pew Research

Centre (2017), shows that hardcopy newspaper readership and, collaterally, its advert revenues have fallen consistently over time while, conversely, online readership and its advert revenue have been rising. Such statistics tend to suggest that some transformation is happening in the print media sector with new media technologies playing a key role in the new trend.

In Nigeria, however, the disruptive impact of new media technologies in the newspaper industry may present a more complex case than in Western societies. considering that newspaper readership had been on the decline even before the advent and popularization of the new media in the country. Abati (2014) captures this vividly when he observes that from the 1950s up till the mid- and late 1980s, newspaper circulation in Nigeria was much higher than what is obtainable today. He notes that newspaper firms in the country today struggle to make reasonable sales in the face of a declining reading culture, particularly among the young. Thus, while this declining reading culture (Ejiofor, 2012; Adebisi, 2013; Hassan, 2014) plays its own role, the increasing penetration of new media complicates the situation further for the future of traditional print media in the country (Abati, 2014; Onyima, 2014). In other words, even if the traditional newspaper industry survives the storm in the West, can the same be said of the industry in Nigeria?

While arguments may and do go on regarding the nature and extent of the impact of new media technologies on the newspaper industry, a look at the projected future of the industry would arguably give concern to stakeholders who desire the survival of the industry. Available statistics tend to show negative growth

projections. For instance, global hardcopy newspaper revenues are expected to steadily decline annually between 2017 and 2021 at the rate of 3%. However, digital revenues will rise annually at a 9.7% rate within the same period (PwC, 2018). The declining advertising revenue means that newspapers will increasingly turn to circulation as a revenue channel, and by 2021, global newspaper circulation revenue will account for 54.0% of total industry revenue (PwC, 2018).

Data from individual nations give a similar picture of circulation and revenue declines. In the United State, job cuts in the newspaper sector have been massive, going from 256,800 employees in 2010 down to 183,200 in 2016. This is not unexpected, given that revenue of the industry is projected to go down from around 30.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2016, to 27 billion U.S. dollars by 2020. Newspaper publishers' key source of revenue advertising is also projected to shrink over the next years (Statistica, 2018).

In the UK, newspaper industry revenue is expected to decline at a compound annual rate of 3.9% to £4.4 billion over the five years running from 2018 to 2023. Meanwhile, between 2018 and 2019, revenue is estimated to fall by 2.9%. The two traditional revenue sources among UK newspaper - print advertising and newspaper sales – have declined consistently over the past five years (IBISWorld, 2018). Interestingly, in the past seven years, advertising revenue has grown only once in the UK, that was, in the first quarter of 2018 when revenue from display ads in national titles grew by 1%. The fact that it has taken such a long interval for this growth to occur may lend credence to the belief among many scholars that the

industry is in trouble globally. Conversely, online advertising has continued to grow annually. In fact, search advertising revenue has grown consistently since 2001, and adverts that appear on Google search results account for £3 out of every £10 paid for advertising in the country (Mayhew, 2018).

In the Netherlands, it is projected that hardcopy circulation will shrink by 9.5% between 2017 and 2021, while digital circulation will increase by 6.6%. Instructively, the expected rate of decline in hardcopy circulation outweighs the expected growth in softcopy circulation. On the other hand, advertising revenue will reduce by 5.8% for hardcopy and increase by 8.7% for digital (PwC, 2017). Hence, newspapers, other things being equal, would expect the rise in digital advert income to overcompensate for the projected losses in hardcopy advert revenue. In other words, while online technologies present their challenges, they also represent some opportunities.

Globally, the picture is such that while hardcopy circulation falls, digital circulation rises. The increasing digital circulation amply compensates for the dwindling hardcopy sales meaning that newspaper circulation overall will continue to grow within the period 2017 to 2018. However, advertising revenue will remain in constant decline as newspapers continue to compete with alternative advertising platforms whose numbers increase greatly by the day (PwC, 2016). The implication of all this is that while newspapers are losing their traditional revenue channels (hardcopy circulation and advertising subscriptions), they have the opportunity to embrace their online alternatives. However, this does not exactly guarantee their

success and survival as these online-based alternatives present their own peculiar challenge of ever increasing players and the attendant intensifying competition. The very nature of new media undermines monopoly and opens the door for an ever increasing number of players to compete for an increasingly scarce audience and revenue.

The foregoing represents what may indeed be called an uncertain future for the newspaper industry globally. Nonetheless, opinions are divided as to the extent this situation should be a cause for worry. This is evident from the fact that scholars are still debating whether what faces the industry can be rightly described as crisis or not. While scholars like Kaye and Quinn (2010), McChesney and Pickard (2011), see the trend as signalling what will be the ultimate death of the newspaper industry, others like Oliver (2014) do not see it to be so. Moreover, scholars like Brüggemann et al. (2016) and Schlesinger and Doyle (2015), who think new media will eventually phase out the hardcopy, do not see this to mean the end of newspaper in general, as the imperative of the intervening technologies means that newspaper practices ought to transcend the hardcopy culture. For them, new media will merely transform and not displace newspaper (Kolo, 2016). For instance, Kolo (2016, p.2) argues that 'the advent of mobile devices like smartphones and tablets brought some hope for the newspaper business model to be saved'.

It has also been stated that the print media industry has been responding to the disruptive effect of new media through some innovative actions that typically include integrating hardcopy with online publications where readers do not have to

pay, and where news is updated very often, as against the conventional daily, weekly and biweekly conventional hardcopy (Petley, 2004; Baran, 2010; McQuail, 2010; Curran, Fenton & Freedman, 2012).

PwC (2016) observes that one of the most pressing challenges newspapers have to confront with is the outflow of advertising dollars to Google and FaceBook. The most direct response of the newspapers to this has been digital migration wherein they have taken their content to the Internet and mobile media, exploring all possible digital platforms therein, thereby boosting their competitiveness in the new era (Aliagan, 2015; Doyle, 2014; Razmerita, 2014; Purdy, Wong & Harris, 2016).

In Nigeria, the story has not been any different as leading traditional media houses such as *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Times*, *The Daily Trust*, *The Guardian*, *The Punch* and *The Vanguard* amongst numerous others (including the not-so-visible fringe publications such as *The Orient*, *The Tide*, *The Advocate* and *The Pyramid* – so-called due to their limited circulation both in terms of number and geographical spread), have continued to respond to the new reality by taking their operation into the new media space, thus disseminating their message both in the traditional hardcopy mode and through online channels (Egbochukwu, 2013; Agboola, 2014). However, these newspapers also restrict certain content such as job recruitment notices to their hardcopy in order to give people reason to still read it. Related to this is the practice of having online only short summary reports of important news events while leaving detailed and in-depth report for the hardcopy version (Aliagan, 2015). Whether all this has solved the challenges and guaranteed the sustenance of



the traditional print media remains a question still to be answered considering that readership of the hardcopy and its share of the advertisement revenue have continued to decline in the country (Agboola, 2014).

Newspapers have also responded to the new media realities through strategic cost cutting. Publications like *The Wall Street Journal* in the United States have collapsed sections of their newspaper. There have also been consolidations with larger conglomerates acquiring smaller rivals. Nevertheless, consolidation has generally not proven to be a successful response because it 'has failed to strengthen publishers' profit to any great degree' (Purdy, Wong & Harris, 2016, p.4). For example, some big media conglomerates now separate their newspaper division from their broadcasting and other media divisions in order to avoid offsetting the losses from the former with yields from the latter? (Purdy, Wong & Harris, 2016).

Giving some instances of this, Purdy *et. al* (2016, p.9) recall that:

*Tribune* split into *Tribune Publishing* for its newspaper assets and *Tribune Media* for its broadcast and other assets. *Scripps* merged with *Journal Communications*, and then split into *JMG* for print and *Scripps* for other media. *JMG* was then acquired by *Gannett*. For its part, *Gannett*, owner of scores of smaller regional newspapers, placed all of its non-newspaper assets into *Tegna*. And *News Corporation* kept its print assets and spun off the rest into *21st Century Fox*.

Newspapers are also trying to cope with the new realities by projecting an image of brands that offer high quality information. With the information chaos arising from new media and the associated "fake news" syndrome, traditional newspapers that have acquired reputation tend to play up their "responsible" image as a way of

attracting major readers or advertisers who typically want to be associated with quality journalism. Thus, these newspapers attempt to retain their competitive edge by striving to represent the old order where meticulous fact check is norm (Kranenburg, 2004). Kranenburg argues that this must be the reason *The New York Times'* subscriptions boomed after the US election in November 2016. Another instance is *The Pittsburgh Tribune* which entirely ceased hardcopy publication and became a free, digital-only publication, targeting to grow its market share of readership and advert subscriptions. As a deliberate strategy, *The Pittsburgh Tribune* had attempted to build its reputation as an online publication. Moreover, this had enabled the organization to establish a huge online followership base that allowed it to solicit funds and raise revenue to support its operations. *The Pittsburgh Tribune* also provided rich media advertising on its site, a selling point for advertisers and an opportunity to charge a premium rate.

However, this tactic has met with mixed success. Jennifer Bertetto, president and chief executive officer of *Tribune Total Media*, the paper's parent company, said, "We hoped that the moves (ceasing print publication and becoming a free, digital-only publication) made last fall would be enough to stabilize our financial position, but it simply wasn't enough. Like other news organizations, our company faces intense financial reality check that compelled us to make additional changes. These changes, although difficult, are necessary to ensure our long-term viability. I am incredibly confident in the direction our organization is heading" (Purdy, Wong & Harris, 2016, p.7).

Another strategy is niche content wherein newspapers target specific segments to satisfy their specific needs. *Wall Street Journal* started its niche publishing by launching *CFO Journal* in 2011 which focused on latest news on marketing and advertising. This was followed in 2012 by *CIO Journal* which focus was technology-related news. Then in 2013, *Risk & Compliance Journal* was floated to target corporate executives with information related to risk management. A year later, *Wall Street Journal* came up with *CMO Today*, a publication with focus on marketing matters. The year 2015 saw the launch of *Logistics Report*, a news site focused on international trade and transportation infrastructure reports (Bilton, 2015). This strategy helped *The Wall Street Journal* to record increased advertising revenue at a time when other newspapers were experiencing steady decline (Greenslade, 2012; Cosgrove & Gomaa, 2014). In his study, Aliagan (2015) found that Nigerian newspapers have responded through migration to the Internet, mobile platforms, niche publications (pullouts) and publishing of certain content in their hardcopy editions only. Such content includes some news reports of particular public interest and job vacancies (which are usually in high demand) this way keeping the hardcopy attractive to the audience.

Some newspaper firms in Europe have introduced hybrid financial models to maximize revenues while minimizing costs. In this arrangement, newspapers are freely distributed in designated areas (usually urban) and sold elsewhere. This strategy is sometimes reversed where sales are particularly strong in urban areas. Newspapers have also moved beyond advertising and copy sales to integrate other non-journalistic revenue channels including education and training, merchandising

activities, and events, exploiting their brand reputation for success (Greenslade, 2012). This latter practice is popular with national newspapers in Nigeria particularly as it involves events, education and training (Aliagan, 2015). For instance, *ThisDay* newspaper organises entertainment shows once in a while, while its event facility, the *ThisDay* Dome, is rented out to other event organisers. *Daily Times* newspaper organises training programmes in journalism which seems to be a money-maker for the group. These programs are publicly known as they are usually publicly advertised in print and electronic media wherever they are to come up.

Many newspaper companies now outsource their printing, dispensing with the need for in-house printing facilities. While this practice had been happening before online publishing started, it has come handy as a cost-saving strategy for newspapers in the new competitive environment occasioned by the Internet. Some have also adjusted their distribution patterns; for instance, instead of the usual practice of dispensing free copies through people's letter boxes, they are given out in supermarkets or on high streets (Greenslade, 2012). Free copy distribution is yet to be entrenched in Nigeria as a strategy of responding to the new media realities.

Notwithstanding what may have been the response of the industry to the new media challenge, many will agree that all is not well with the global newspaper sector and this includes the Nigerian market. Tony Onyima (2014), a former Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief (MD/E-in-C) of a national daily, *The Sun*, says, newspapers are "in real trouble... with the situation perilously edging towards crisis" (p.3). No better evidence exists to this effect than the rate at which

newspaper companies go out of business in the country, with once famous names such as *Daily Times*, *Concord* and many previously flourishing state government-owned newspapers ceasing publication. Efforts to rebuild the *Daily Times*, arguably once the formidable flagship of the Nigerian newspaper industry, have so far failed to return the paper to anywhere near its former position (Udeze, 2011; Akpan, 2016).

Similarly, many popular national newspapers and magazines are currently struggling to survive, confronted by difficulties in meeting wage demands and other running costs in the face of dwindling circulation and advertising revenues (Momoh, 2004; Abati, 2014; Egbochukwu, 2013). The situation has become so bad that new newspapers spring up every now and then – with some promising to become a huge success – but only to crumble sooner than expected after a persistent struggle with hostile market forces (Udeze, 2011; Akpan, 2016). The arrears of unpaid wages that usually characterise this struggle and subsequent folding up prompted Abdulwaheed Odusile, the current President of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), to express the following concern:

The current situation is most worrisome. [...] It is seemingly becoming the culture for newspaper houses to spring up everyday only to fold up in an eye blink. Our members are the most affected by this ugly trend as they end up being subjected to unbearable economic pains once the papers begin to owe salaries. Ultimately, the papers close shop and these journalists are thrown out of job without any apology, even though some of them were persuaded to quit their former media houses of employment to join the new ones usually with promise of better working condition (2017, p.8).

The foregoing suggests that managers of the newspaper industry in Nigeria are facing a great challenge in terms of assuring the survival of the industry during difficulty times. While western scholars and commentators (Petley, 2004; Baran, 2010; McQuail, 2010; Rottwilm, 2014; Lawrenson, 2015; Fergusson, 2017) have suggested various ways newspaper industries may be able to overcome the challenges posed by new media disruption, the peculiarities of the Nigerian condition ought to be taken into consideration in any generic prescription. For instance, variables like the economy, media culture and demographics (including literacy, age, gender, and wealth distribution) are fundamental in determining how a particular communication technology fares in a place, and the nature and extent of challenge it produces therein (McQuail, 2010; Baran & Davies, 2012). Therefore, any one-solution-fits-all prescription for steering newspaper industries out of the new media storm needs to be closely scrutinised and adapted accordingly.

Against this background, one can therefore consider the Nigerian newspaper industry as one whose peculiar challenges need to be investigated vis-a-vis its response strategies, and the disruptive impact of the new media technologies on the industry. Therefore, this thesis seeks to examine the challenges of new media technologies on the media practices and operation of Nigeria newspaper industries. It uses both an epistemological and ontological approach which studies both the theoretical knowledge (understanding) and reality (what exists) in the media management practices of the Nigerian newspaper industry to interrogate the impact of new media technologies on the industry and the managerial response to it.

Consequently, a key feature of this thesis is to provide an understanding of the challenges of new media technologies on media management practice and the operation of newspaper industries in Nigeria, a developing economy with peculiar socio-cultural and political history. This thesis also studies how media management practices change and how key players, particularly, the newspaper managers, interact with new media technologies. Specifically, it considers the relationships between media management, the production of the newspaper content, and the influence of new media technologies. A significant part of this consists of examining the trends, challenges, and coping strategies and to generate insights for future media management practices and operations, particularly as they relate to the Nigerian newspaper industry. The next section will be offering the rationale for the study.

## **Section 1.2 Rationale for the Study**

All over the world, the newspaper business is facing many challenges. These are brought about by changing times, changes in socio-cultural traits in different societies, demographic changes which inform new audiences' taste for news, economic challenges, as well as the challenge of new technologies (Jones & Salter, 2012). These challenges are depriving many newspapers of readership and revenues. More importantly, the emergence of the internet and accompanying new media technologies are disrupting the economic base of newspaper industries, as many potential readers are finding alternative sources of news.

Nigerian newspapers are part of the world's press ecology; hence they are not insulated from these global trends. While it may not be completely correct to argue that the hardships the newspaper business in Nigeria is going through are wholly as a result of the migration of news readers to the online environment – given that these hardships predated online culture in the country –, it is obvious that it has, in no small measure, aggravated this development.

Although there have been a number of studies (Obijiofor, 2003; Olukotun, 2005; Aborishade, 2010; Ekwo, 2011; Kperogi, 2011; *Daily Trust*, 2012; Jones & Salter, 2012) on the challenges of the newspaper business in Nigeria, especially since the emergence of digitalization, convergence, internet and new media technologies, this study will focus on how these technologies have affected the inner workings of today's newspaper in Nigeria and how the managers have responded to this. Some of the previous studies have noted how these technologies affect news production processes without looking at their effect on the larger managerial realities which include the entire administrative and business aspects of newspapering. Further, the thesis will localise its investigation to the peculiar experiences of Nigeria as against presumptions of any universal template. This is more so the case given that dominant discourses on this subject have been rooted in western experiences, which may easily obscure local peculiarities of various peoples and cultures. It is in this light that this study will investigate how these newspaper houses have carried on with their operations in the face of disruptive technologies as well as analysing their successes, challenges and prospects.



Specifically, this study will be focusing on the following selected Nigerian Dailies: *The Sun, The Nation, The Daily Times* and *Daily Trust*. These newspapers have a national outlook, enjoying a wide readership and strong influence in both the Northern and Southern regions of Nigeria (Adedeji, 2009). The North-South divide is a very important consideration in any inquiry whose findings are intended to reflect the experience of Nigeria in holistic terms. This is because these two parts of the country represent an important cultural divide that has vitally shaped the nation's experience in terms of history, politics, economy and culture. While the North is predominantly Muslim and culturally more conservative with feudal and oligarchic colouration, the South is predominantly Christian and culturally more liberal, with a stronger underlying Western ideology (Anyaele, 2003). Media studies have acknowledged that these differences have had some impact on the media culture across the divide (Daramola, 2003; Adedeji, 2007; Udeze, 2011). As such, selecting newspaper houses across the two geographical areas ensures a better representative sample for this study.

### Section 1.3 Objectives of the Study

Against the foregoing background, this study proposes the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the nature and extent of disruption being experienced by the Nigerian newspaper industry as a result of the advent of new media;
2. To examine how Nigerian newspaper managers cope with such technological disruption; and

3. To suggest and explore future possibilities, resilience options, or strategies to mitigate against further.

With the foregoing research objectives, the study puts forward the research questions it seeks answers to in the next section. This provides for the specific focus of the study as well as guiding the researcher's efforts towards unpacking the phenomena.

## Section 1.4 Research Questions

In investigating how selected Nigerian newspaper organizations have conducted their operations in the face of disruptive technologies, the thesis examines the emergence of new media technologies in Nigeria, its features, the degree of use by these newspaper establishments and how the deployment of new media has changed the whole media management process. The research at hand attempts to comprehend how new media technologies are challenging Nigerian newspaper managerial practices in terms of whether or not they are redefining conventional journalistic standards, values, and practices. Ultimately, this would unpack the successes, challenges and prospects of new media technologies in Nigerian newspaper industries management.

Based on these research objectives, this thesis poses the following as a major research question: What are the observable trends in the management of Nigerian newspapers at a time when new media technologies are posing a challenge to the

survival of traditional newspapers? In answering the above question, this thesis further aims to find answers to the following sub-set of questions: *What is the nature and extent of disruption being experienced by the Nigerian newspaper industry as a result of the advent of new media? How are Nigerian newspaper managers attempting to cope with the challenges stemming from the disruption? To what extent and in what ways are the newspapers exploiting opportunities offered by the disruption? What are the future possibilities for the Nigerian newspaper industry in terms of coping with the threat posed to its survival by new media?*

Through these aforementioned questions, the thesis seeks to generate in-depth understanding of new media technologies, newspaper production processes and media management practices. The main question will provide information on the observable trends in the Nigerian newspaper industry and media management. Other questions will examine and extract real-time data on the challenges presented by the activities of new media technologies to media management as well as the coping strategies adopted by the Nigerian media managers in handling the effects of online media features.

Additionally, newsroom practices will be examined to show areas of overlap between features of traditional print media organizations and those of online journalism. These questions will also offer a chance for discussion regarding the future of the traditional newspaper in Nigeria, with the insight to provide a strategic roadmap that could guide the activities of the industry players. The question on newspaper audience satisfaction within the context of the imperatives of the new

media era will help show the position and perception of the media audience, which will ultimately guide the industry players on future strategic management practices. These questions are relevant vis-à-vis Technological Determinism and Disruptive Technology theories and are particularly so in probing the influence of new media technologies on the media management practice and newspaper operation process. The import of this study particularly to scholarship and the Nigerian media industry is encapsulated in the proceeding section.

### Section 1.5 Significance of the Study

Unlike many previous studies such as Ali (2008), Hayes (2010), Ejiofor (2012), Adebisi (2013), Udeze (2013), Hassan (2014), Agboola (2014), Adetusi (2015) and Tianbo (2015), that tend to focus solely on journalistic components of media operations, this study will engage the subject from a broadly managerial perspective. Since media management, according to Owuamalam (2007), encompasses all dimensions of media operations - policies, administration, gatekeeping, marketing, human resource, and machinery – journalistic operation represents only a partial picture of media management.

Thus, this thesis will add to the growing conceptual and empirical literature on print media management and the challenges of new media technologies on mainstream media in sub-Saharan Africa. It is assumed that since the countries of this sub-region of the world share a lot in common in terms of socio-economic, cultural and political experience, and that what applies in one basically tends to apply to others (Ibrahim, 2009; Paulson, 2014). These countries share the same historical

experience of European colonisation and the attendant cultural influences, political instability as characterised by coups, wars and other forms of conflict, weakness of democratic institutions, inadequate infrastructural development, widespread illiteracy and poverty – in essence these nations have the general character of being underdeveloped. Again, culturally, these nations still retain an appreciable level of communality as against the liberal individualism of Western societies. Therefore, Anyanwu (2019, p.173) argues that ‘information technology penetration in Africa should be measured through an African communal lens rather than through a western individualistic lens, and that the western individualistic lens should not be used to measure the level of development in African communities’. Nonetheless, care should be taken to avoid exaggerating the claim of political, economic and cultural similarities among these countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. This is advisable, because, first, even before the common experience of colonisation, each of these nations has its peculiar historical and cultural experiences. For instance, South Africa had contact with Europeans and Indians who migrated into that territory; an experience that has shaped in time the political and cultural atmosphere of the nation. Also, before their colonial experiences, countries like Ghana, Sierra Leone, Angola and Equatorial Guinea became Christianised, others like Somalia became Islamised, while a nation like Nigeria embraced the two religions (Islam in the north and Christianity in the south). Apart from religion, while some countries had economic and cultural contact with Arabs before colonisation, others had with Europeans, and some others with both. Even after independence, political experiences have differed in certain respects. For instance, while some countries have experienced significant upheavals, some others have been relatively stable,

even as some have had more enduring democratic experience, while some others have been more unstable in this regard. Secondly, the neo-colonial experience has been different, especially between the Francophone and Anglophone countries. While France has had more visible and more direct influence on her former colonies (for instance, French troops have been permanently stationed in Ivory Coast and Chad), the same may not be said of the Anglophone countries. In fact, the various administration styles employed by the French and English imperial powers have had a lasting effect on the national experiences of the former colonies (Anyaele, 2003). The Lusophone and Arabophone countries are not exact different in these differing experiences. In fact, Islamic countries like Sudan, Chad, Mauritania and Somalia have experienced Islam-permeated politics since independence. Importantly, within the context of the Eastern-Western bloc politics, experiences differed as countries like Angola and Congo became a battle ground for the two religio-ideological powers, while others were not that directly affected. Against, this backdrop, findings of this study remain primarily applicable to Nigeria alone, but will secondarily serve as a stepping stone to understanding and inquiring into the situation in other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, with whom Nigeria still shares some broad characteristics irrespective of the finer differences described above. These broad characteristics relate to their level of democratic and economic development – earning them the broad classification, developing nations. Their common colonial experience has also condemned them to a common fate of neo-colonialism. An outcome of this is that these countries have had to negotiate with the cultural hegemony represented by the Euro-American domination of the media industry. In the context of newspaper culture, this hegemony has imposed capitalist

liberalism as a dominant ideology of modern newspapering (Uche, 1996; Agba, 2002). Furthermore, the study will be a departure from what may be termed 'western-centric' bias, wherein the West becomes a lens through which countries of other regions of the world are viewed. Specifically, the fact that Nigeria and other countries of the region had received their media culture from the west has tended to impose a practice wherein western experience has been the template for viewing the media realities of these nations, despite the clear differences in historical, political, economic and cultural experiences between them and the West (Egbon, 2001). The approach of this study promises to be a departure from this recurring practice by factoring in local variables of politics, culture and economy in the analysis. Therefore, the study localises and focuses on examining Nigerian newspaper phenomena and realities within her own local context. In this manner, this study attempts to build a conversation around how new media technologies affect and shape media management practices in Nigerian, particularly within her newspaper industry.

The findings of the research will generate insights and guide readers, investors, the international community, governments and independent media owners in discussions surrounding policy decisions aimed at developing and disseminating information or content in newspapers and new media in Nigeria and the sub-Saharan region. It will also serve as a stepping stone for further academic inquiry.

The following section takes theoretical considerations into account. It is important to determine what theories and ideas exist in relation to this study. In addition to

providing the scientific grounding, the theories presented below provide the conceptual framework for this research. These theories are exhaustively discussed in section 3.6. However, the theoretical considerations section presents the theories and summarizes their basic tenets as well as the significance of consideration to the study.

## Section 1.6 Theoretical Considerations

This study is situated within the theoretical framework of Technological Determinism, Disruptive Technology and Diffusion of Innovations to probe the influence of new media technologies on media management practices and newspaper operation processes.

Coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), an American sociologist, Technological determinism theory is “a reductionist theory that presumes that a society’s technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values” (Croteau & Oynes, 2003, p.13). The theory argues that technology is the basis or the determining force of all human activity. Technological determinism approach helps explain that the relationship between humans and technology is interactive rather than linear; it is mutual and dynamic rather than one-sided and simplistic.

Moreover, new media technologies play a role in developing and changing the media culture and activities of members of society. For instance, new media tools such as smart phones and email platforms, have the potential to provide reporters and editors with a better platform to communicate and exchange information in a



timely fashion among themselves and with their virtual community. Thus, within the context of media management, new media technologies do not merely impose operational imperatives on the managers but also leave room for the managers to determine how to use such technologies to realise their corporate goals.

Disruptive technology theory, propounded in 1997 by Harvard professor Clay Christensen, “refers to a new technology having lower cost and performance measured by traditional criteria, but having higher ancillary performance” (Utterback and Acee, 2003, p.2). The theory offers a framework for examining socio-technological phenomena, leading to an understanding of how a new innovation alters values and strategies within a given sphere of life. It is a useful basis for the investigation of interactions between the use of new media technologies in the work environment and ultimately to understand how media managers cope with the activities of the newspaper production process.

The theory provides opportunity to define the link between human and non-human factors in media management practices. Hence, within the context of the mass media, the theory offers the researcher the framework to explain the newspaper production process and how new media technologies have shaped and redefined media management practices. It has been generally accepted by scholars that new media technologies represent instance of disruption (Sassen, 2002; Baran, 2010; McQuail, 2010). This disruption is comprehensive as it affects the technical, aesthetic, ethical and business dimensions of media operations (Gwajinka, 2003; Ezeibe and Nwagwu, 2009; Agboola, 2014). Moreover, this thesis argues that

disruptive technology theory can offer an ontology of newspaper production, and how technologies influence media management practices. This will help generate insights and an in-depth understanding of media management practices in a typical newspaper industry.

The Diffusion of Innovations Theory 'seeks to explain how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures' (Lewis, 2009, p.201). It holds that a new idea or technology becomes accepted based on its relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, triability and observability (Rogers, 1962). Adoption of such an idea or technology occurs by gradual diffusion through the five segments of the population starting with the most adventurous to the most conservative i.e. innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards (Rogers, 1962). Evidently, factors such as "relative advantage", "compatibility", "complexity", "triability" and "observability" are both a function of the technology itself and characteristics of users of such technology. Consequently, the theory, at any rate, qualifies as a moderate alternative to the extreme reductionism of the Technological Determinism approach.

The choice of the above three theories - Disruptive theory, Technology Determinism theory and Diffusion of Innovation theory helped the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of media management practice and the process of newspaper production. This is a novel research topic in the field of communication and media in Nigeria as it draws insights from top-down (media managers' perspective) as well as bottom-up (audiences' perspective) investigations. Moreover, none of the

previous studies analysed by the researcher in the course of his literature search directly adopted this approach in the examination of the relationship and challenges of new media technologies for media management, particularly the Nigerian newspaper industry. Before looking at this issue further, the next section draws a necessary distinction between traditional newspaper (hardcopy publication) and online publication.

### Section 1.7 Examining the distinction between Traditional Newspaper (Hardcopy Publication) and New Media (Online Publication)

This section provides a general definition for and a distinction between traditional newspaper hard copy publication and online publication.

#### Section 1.7.1 The Traditional Newspaper Medium

Until the emergence of what is to be later described as ‘new media’, mass media channels were: radio, TV networks, movie theatres, magazines and newspapers which were majorly in urban areas (with fewer in rural areas). These media channels controlled much of what a society saw, read and heard. In the case of print media, which is the focus of this study, the outlets were enabled by government regulation licenses and guided by the editorial thrust of the print media organization. To be a publisher, one had to acquire a license, which was difficult to obtain, before operating. Therefore, there were regulations and legislations that guided the activities of the print media. Moreover, producing and distributing print media, organizations required significant capital due to very high cost of equipment, personnel and distribution costs. Thus, print as well as radio and TV media

organizations were in the hands of very few influential individuals who ultimately had a stronghold on society. Unless one was part of these media channels, it was practically impossible to reach a targeted audience as content was developed by and routed through media owners. These media channels are referred to as old, traditional or legacy media.

From a general perspective, a newspaper is a form of print medium with periodic publication of written information covering several activities in various fields, including politics, economy, culture, arts and sports. Among others, it also includes manifested ideas in the form of opinion columns, reviews and editorials, which could be mass produced, disseminated and stored for audience. Essentially, the role of a newspaper is to 'find out fresh information on matters of public interest and to relay it as quickly and as accurately as possible to readers in an honest and balanced way' (Randall, 2007, p.25).

The history of the modern newspaper is importantly tied to the evolution of the printing press (Eze, 2017). The first historically recorded instance of printing technology appeared in China 220 AD. Texts were reproduced on paper in what is known as woodblock printing. Movable type was invented by Bi Sheng around 1040 AD and in 1440 Johann Gutenberg invented the modern printing press. The emergence of the printing press in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century in western countries became the foundation of the development of newspaper and journalism practice (Hernandez and Rue, 2015). Until the invention of the printing press, the early practices of print media found in ancient Rome were hand-copied onto boards and

carried around to keep the citizenry informed. Hence, the emergence of newspapers has changed the way people exchange ideas; as they provide an efficient and effective way through which knowledge and information are produced, shared and stored. This has contributed to the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment. Nielsen, Cornia and Kalogeropoulos (2016) note that the advent of the newspaper helped to increase the level of knowledge and engagement in the population, while holding people accountable for their actions through reporting. In addition to providing information, entertainment and interpreting news stories, the newspaper serves as a medium through which businesses can advertise their services and products to their target audience. Revenues generated from sales of the newspaper help the newspaper organization to fund and sustain its activities. Consequently, patronization of the newspaper in form of readership and placing an advertisement is critical to newspaper circulation which in turn is viewed as a key enabler to its existence.

In addition, the newspapers' publishers are people that can be traced and sued if information provided is considered libellous. Therefore, journalists from newspaper are required to comply with sets of ethical standards while reporting. However, this is not to induce that traditional newspapers are more trustworthy than other media as sensational reporting and ethical breaches could be found in some newspaper publications. Typically, a newspaper generates its stories and information from several sources, including from news agencies and journalists who go to the scene of events to record and report goings-on. The journalist's everyday tasks include gathering information, writing news stories, conducting interviews as well as

reporting news updates to the sub-editor (SEd)/Daily Editor (DE). This traditional process requires the journalists to be physically involved both in gathering news stories from the field and presenting to the DE in the newsroom, in order to conduct the editing and final processing of the news script for publication.

However, there exists no networking system in the traditional newspaper workplace to coordinate the news practice process and production workflow in a timely manner. Moreover, the non-automation of newsrooms limits news management, including the capacity of a journalist in the field to connect with an editor in the newsroom to obtain and manage information. Mauthe and Thomas (2004) contend that the traditional system makes media management practices difficult as media managers have limited capabilities for dealing with archive storage as well as conducting efficient research for news production. This implies that the media workers' ability to conveniently conduct shared news practices and nurture news archives is limited.

The newspaper is printed and comes in a text-form providing for permanence of publication content; it is also tangible, so permitting the dissemination of news and advertising information. The variety of its content provides advantages and values to the newspaper audience essentially because it contains information from different fields like politics, business, culture, sports and entertainment. However, and typical of print media, it takes more time to produce a newspaper. In order to print a newspaper, the news product must be designed, and the text must be written and thoroughly edited for errors before it is processed for printing. Once a

publication is out, corrections cannot be effected on that same issue. It also takes longer to circulate and distribute newspaper editions to the diverse newsstands for purchase or to be delivered to people's homes. Consequently, it is time-consuming for a produced newspaper to get to its audience.

Against the above discourse on traditional newspaper media, the current study, in the proceeding sub-section will review the New Media concept. This ultimately draws out and interrogates the core distinctions among them and older legacy media.

#### Section 1.7.2 The New Media

New media encompass all digital and interactive forms of information and communication exchanges. Among others, these include social networking sites, websites, blogs, mobile apps and virtual worlds. Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006) note that these platforms rely on technologies such as internet-enabled mobile phones, computers (laptops, desktops), digital cameras, audio-video recorders etc to operate in terms of creating, publishing, distributing and accessing information. Within this context, Meadows (2007) notes that new media technologies allow media managers such as the DE and journalists to 'monitor incoming news agency, write news stories, work on a rundown list, access the Internet, and access audio or video clips and their network's archives from their desktop' (p.16). Jones et al. (2013) contend that digital workflow provides media managers with the capacities to manage news production practices. Particularly, through digital integrated media technologies like digital cameras, smartphones, email services, lightening tools and

audio mixers journalist can communicate scenarios to the news crew in the news control room, bringing speed to information dissemination to the audience. This implies that the new media technologies form links and relays in real-time, the activities happening in the field to the newsroom. In this way they create a virtual community of media players.

Moreover, these new approaches provide journalists with more flexibility to work, manage their responsibilities and conveniently conduct their media practice. New media technologies provide benefits for media managers within the newsroom, including in newspaper production management workflow. Hence, the digitalization of the newsroom offers innovative approaches to the production, dissemination and storage of news product as well as management practice. These innovative approaches make the news reporting task easier and more efficient, so that the news production workflow is simpler and more manageable (Booth, 2016). In other words, new media technologies bring changes that make media practice flexible. This, according to Conboy (2011), represents the birth of modern journalism. Eadie (2009) submits that 'modern journalism has a predecessor in pictorial journalism. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century shortly after the introduction of photography, illustrated newspapers, appeared in each of the western countries beginning with Great Britain' (p.32). For Anderson et al (2016), 'throughout the twentieth century, as politics, economics and technology changed, journalism changed as well' (p.162). Moreover, Rudin and Ibbotson (2002) stated that:

The impact of technology and the change in working practice in the newspaper and magazine industries (sic) is



clearly evident in the use of computers and associated packages in producing newspapers and magazines (p.78).

Building on the forgoing, new media technologies could be seen as having prompted modern journalistic practices to appear, by influencing the format of the newspaper, its content and daily management practices. For instance, modern journalism involves a digital newspaper package where news content is presented online. However, within this context, a new set of skills is required to be developed and managed by media managers. Among others, these skills help to introduce digital effects into news production; allowing news content to appeal, engage and interact with the audience. Usher (2016) noted that skills improvement has emerged and overlaps in a variety of ways (in the form of photography, design, data visualization and computation) to support the new shape of modern journalism that is online and interactive. Hence, in an online and interactive journalistic practice, technological skills are harnessed to reach and create a new culture of local intimacy for audience.

The next subsection deals with online journalism and new media technologies. It discusses how new media technologies have influenced journalism, particularly as seen in the increasing application of online and digital tools to journalistic processes.

### **Section 1.7.3 Online Journalism and New Media Technologies**

Online journalism denotes that news content is available and accessible through the internet. It originally emerged in 1970 as a form of teletext in the United Kingdom

and was patented by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1971 (Kawamoto, 2003, p.32). In addition, 'the British Telecom research laboratories had developed an interactive videotext service' (Jackson and Townsend, 2014, p.62). The French and Canadians followed on from this era as Canada launched telidon videotext system that used interactive information services (Rogers, 1986). However, the advancement of PCs in 1980s accelerated the networking technology with dial-up online services. Moreover, with the increasing availability and accessibility of Internet tools among populations, technological changes and awareness occur in society (Singh, 2004). For instance, the French experience with the Minitel/Teletel system introduced in July, 1980, connected millions of users and created a culture of awareness in French society of new information technologies.

However, the emergence of the internet challenged traditional practices, prompting both society and state to abandon Minitel. This was because of the capacity of these USA made new media and communication technologies such as PCs to deregulate the highly regulated French audio-visual sector. Lynch (2013) notes that 'internet makes it possible to deliver information anywhere to anyone who has access to a computer, a smartphone or other advanced technology' (p.44). The internet became a borderless product capable of dramatically targeting and reaching audiences anywhere. Hence, it is through the internet that online journalism is conducted in terms of creating, editing, shaping, disseminating and managing news content, including that of newspaper.

Jakubowicz and Sukosd (2008) contend that 'the biggest impact of the internet and World Wide Web on (traditional) journalism is expressed by the emergence of online journalism' (p.205). The Internet serves as an enabler to new media technologies as they depend on the service to operate. The connection offered to these media technologies by the internet enables media managers to conduct their daily media practice, such as communicating directly with their field agents for breaking news stories at any time, and providing news updates regularly (Craig, 2010; Briel, 2018). Moreover, with these media technologies, media managers are able to design engaging content with high quality visual components that enable interaction with their audiences and patronage (Jakubowicz & Sukosd, 2008). This indicates that in the current technological changes and developments, media practices have evolved to be more interactive than ever before. This has implications for media management practice as it provides an opportunity for achieving more audience satisfaction through better quality services. The fact that the audience can immediately and continuously give their feedback also challenges managers to embrace a greater level of social responsibility and ethics. Also, the new media technologies transform the texture of competition landscape, creating new rules and ethos of success.

In view of the foregoing, the next section will conceptualize disruptive technologies and interrogate how new media technologies are influencing media practice and management. It discusses these technological challenges and makes the case for why they could be described as disruptive, whether by way of transforming, modifying or supplanting the traditional models.

## Section 1.8 Conceptualizing Disruptive Technology

The term “new media technologies” refers to interactive and digital technologies, including the mobile computing device (like smartphone), streaming audio and video gadgets (like digital camera), email services, web sites, virtual reality environments, online (social media) communities and platforms. Practically, these platforms are Internet-enabled and considered disruptive to the activities of established (traditional) media given the changes they bring. This disruptiveness means that there has been some fundamental unsettling of the conventional and routines, which could be interpreted as either challenges or opportunities, depending on how it is perceived or handled. As such, “disruptive” can have both negative and positive connotations.

The concept of disruptive technologies was introduced by Christensen Clay, who distinguishes further between sustaining and disruptive technologies (Christensen, 1997 as cited in Job, 2017). He argued that there are repeated patterns of incumbent business failures due to new, low-end products introduced by small innovating firms. This happens because, usually, the existing market leaders choose to concentrate on their core markets rather than adopt the new and initially weaker technology, until a tipping point is reached when the new, disruptive technology takes over the market causing the big firms to fail.

Within the context of the media and communications industry, scholars have written on how radical innovations are challenging the industry today, noting the

influx of 'smart' technologies, which disrupt the way today's media operate and how content is developed, consumed and shared (Picard, 2003; Latzer, 2009; Kaul, 2013). The development of new media technologies has led to a renewed research interest in the implications of these changes for the media production process and media management practice. Pavlik (2000) argues that new media technologies have changed media practice, pointing out that the new structure allows media practitioners to improve the quality of media content and complete work efficiently with fewer media workers. Hence, this new structure creates a new environment in which media managers adopt and apply new management practices by delivering new tools which support them in newspaper production.

Within the context of newspaper print media, there have been significant changes in the activities of newspaper organizations including the appearance of new tasks and jobs. For instance, there has been an increased amount of news content produced as well as the set-up of online platforms where these contents are launched rapidly, including as news breaks. From this point of view, new media technologies have created new and different opportunities as well as tasks for managers in an interactive and competitive media environment (Saltzi & Dickinson, 2008). Because of these changes, some traditional news organizations have found themselves in a downward spiral while some new media companies are on the rise. For example, Google, Yahoo news, Flipboard, YouTube, Facebook, Naver, Daum, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. represent some of the new giants that emerged through digital disruption the world over (*The New York Times*, 2014). Even 'older'

new media such as BuzzFeed are being swept aside and taken out of business by emerging 'newer' digital platforms.

These changes are of concern to media management. Saltzi and Dickinson (2008) note that traditional news organizations are undergoing substantial changes in terms of strategic thinking and work organization. Put differently, technological changes present challenges to traditional media management practices. The challenges are seen in the way they conduct their business, which demands for new skills, new initiatives and new ethos. For instance, journalists are faced with digital transformations in their work practices. These transformations include graphics, interactive geographic locations, online editing, audio-visual capture and reformatting etc. As a result, media management practices are continuously evolving to one of applying multi-media, multi-skills and multi-tasking (Paulussen, 2012; Pavlik, 2000).

Ultimately, the idea of multi-tasking in the new media environment is becoming critical in media management practices, particularly in dealing with evolving media technologies. However, these technologies provide the organization with resourceful ways of managing their resources including, operational costs associated with staffing, managing production times and creating improved news content for online consumption (Quinn, 2005). The study by Aviles et al. (2002) shows that media managers have adapted to the new environment of media practice through reductions in staff numbers and work pressures that create more responsibility for them.

It is therefore, imperative that media managers understand those changes in order to adapt, interact and manage their new work environment (Pavlik, 2000). This also implies that there is a relationship between disruptive innovation, managerial cognitive capabilities and strategic change as illustrated below;

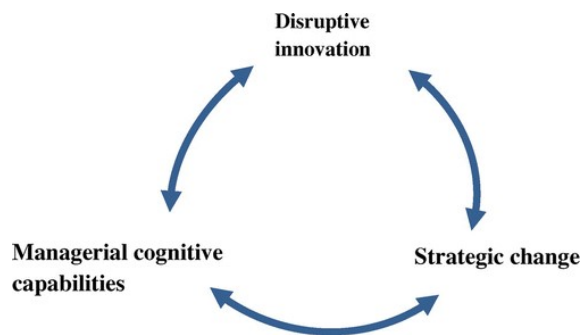


Figure 1. Relations between disruptive innovation, managerial cognitive capabilities and strategic change. Source: Masoud (2017, p.1).

Within the context of media practice, the above illustration indicates that the role of media managers is bound up with their skills and creative ability to adopt, combine and manage the media technologies to produce news content. Media managers who are competent in the application of new media tools are empowered to organize, manage and produce improved news packages that appeal to audiences (Quinn, 2005). Within this context, we can argue that media technologies have implications on the management of workflows by managers.

As already mentioned above, the word “disruptive” could be problematic as it may be interpreted to imply that a new technology is destabilising an old order, an established interest. However, it is still the truth that depending on one’s situation

and point of observation, such an innovation described as “disruptive” may in fact appear “stabilizing”. This is because it may represent for an organization an opportunity to attain a success which the old order had prevented it from attaining. Thus, the old order becomes prohibitive while the new “disruptive” order becomes an opportunity. For instance, beyond the field of media and communication, Richards and Hunt (1965) recall that when machine weaving came to replace hand weaving, it created a serious industrial crisis as mobs protested and burnt some of the machines which the common people saw as a threat to their means of livelihood - hand weaving. However, for others, it opened the way for either investment in the new industry or employment in the large textile industries, an opportunity lost by some in the old order. This study uses the term ‘disruptive’ to illustrate technology -driven changes in the Nigerian newspaper industry – whether such changes are by way of challenges or opportunities.

The next section focuses on the content of the study of the study and how this content is structured across the chapters.

### Section 1.9 Content and Structure of the Study

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter One focuses on the background analysis, rationale for the study, research objectives and questions. It offers an overview of the work, giving a comprehensive picture of the Nigerian print media in the light of new media realities as well as how significant this study is to scholarship. The next section is the literature review, which is carried out in two parts covering Chapters Two and Chapter Three. Chapter Two has six (6) sections. First, there is background



knowledge on Nigerian society (2.1) offering a panoramic view of the nature and scenarios that shape the Nigerian society in historical, political, economic, cultural and demographic terms. The next section, The Nigerian Media Outlook (2.2) examines the nature of the country's media industry before situating this in a sociological matrix using the PEST (**P**olitical, **E**conomic, **S**ocial and **T**echnological) Model developed by the researcher. Section 2.3 proceeds to examine the newspaper industry in Nigeria, profiling the four newspapers that are the focus of the study. The succeeding section (2.4) discusses Nigeria's Global Internet Ranking. Then section 2.5. focuses on Media Technologies and Newspaper Industry. The socio-historical development of the Nigerian Newspaper industry section (2.4) follows and provides the framework within which the study discusses the pre-independence Nigerian newspaper development (2.4.1), the post-colonial era of the Nigerian Newspaper (2.4.2), the Nigerian Newspapers during the military era (2.4.3) and the contemporary Nigerian Newspaper industry (2.4.4). Section 2.5 - an overview profile of the selected national newspapers - provides background information on the contemporary newspapers selected for the study. The next section, the new media technologies and newspaper industry (2.6) engages the relevant concepts of new media technologies and discusses their influences on the newspaper industry. This section equally encapsulates the old-new media divide in the newspaper industry (2.6.1) as well as the liaison between the Nigerian newspaper industry and new media technologies (2.6.2). Chapter Three is divided into nine (9) sections. The first section looks at media management concepts and engages various components of newspaper organization that is of import to media management sentence construction needs attention. They include: the editorial

(content) (3.2.1), administration (3.2.2) and revenue (3.2.3). The key media managers in a typical Nigerian newspaper organization (3.3) as well as Africa literature on media management practice and new media technologies are equally captured (3.4). The section presents and discusses the technological effects on management of traditional newspaper. Section 3.5 examines media management in new media era. Next comes the section on the theoretical framework, which interrogates Technological Determinism (TD) (3.6.1), Disruptive Technology (DT) theories (3.6.2) and Diffusion of Innovations (DOI). Subsection 3.6.4 thereafter justifies the application of TD, DT and DOI theories to the study but puts forward a working model, Techno-Human Dynamism that seeks to integrate the three theories. Chapter Four defines, discusses and justifies the study methodology, noting the research tools and procedures applied. Chapter Five is on data presentation, analysis and interpretation. This involves presentation, discussion and interpretation of data (research responses), as well as presentation of findings. Chapter Six summarises the thesis and presents the conclusions. It further discusses the managerial implications of the study, offers some recommendations and shows the limitations of the study. Bibliography and appendices form the last sections of the study.

## Chapter 2 Understanding the Nigerian Research Context

This chapter offers an operational understanding of the Nigerian State and discusses the socio-historic development of and outlook for the Nigerian newspaper industry. As observed by Anyanwu (2019, p.174), the 'lack of understanding of the complex communal structures in African communities have impacted the ability of western agencies and intellectuals to identify appropriate analytical tools to measure telecommunication penetration in Africa'. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is to provide an overview to the nature of Nigeria State as well as the framework for future research and strategy review of the country, with respect to new media technologies application in the newspaper industry. This chapter also reviews various literatures related to the Nigerian traditional print media, particularly the newspapers and provides the framework for understanding the nature of the Nigerian newspaper industry. The literature review draws on journal articles, textbooks, academic websites, national statistics/fact booklets and independent research reports. These offer insights into related literature on the challenges of new media technologies for the Nigerian traditional print media industry. A significant portion of the literature provided was accessed via online databases, including the University of Liverpool's e-library database, online African Journals and Google Scholar electronic databases. These literature sources (journals and non-journal articles) have mostly been published within the last 15 years. The key words for the searches include Mass Communication, Nigerian Traditional Print Media, Nigerian Newspaper, Machine-Assisted Media, Information Communication

Technologies, Internet, New Media, Media Management, Technology Determinism and Disruptive Technology.

Furthermore, national fact sheets and independent survey reports are considered and applied. These provide the researcher with useful insights into what other scholars and independent researchers have already researched. They also provide knowledge on relevant facts and figures for this study. This exercise has enabled the researcher to gain a better and in-depth understanding of the subject-matter as well as knowledge of the ways different scholars have approached the discourse. This in turn has afforded the study the impetus to identify gaps in knowledge and make its own contribution to the body of literature on new media technologies and their effects on newspapers and their management.

As this study is on the Nigerian society and its newspapers, the next section will provide an understanding of the nature and scenarios that have shaped the Nigerian society under which the newspaper organizations operate. This understanding will enrich the discourse and invite the reader to consider the full import of this study.

## Section 2.1 Background Knowledge on Nigeria Society

Nigeria, a country on the west coast of Africa became independent from Britain in 1960. Since then, she has experienced unprecedented ethnic division, socio-political underdevelopment and economic challenges arguably as a result of institutional corruption as perpetrated by some members of the political ruling class

(Ogbondah, 2011, p.9; Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011, p.111). Corruption and unaccountability among members of the political class have plagued Nigeria and her people. Some of such corrupt practices include national crude oil theft, inflation of the values of government contracts in order to obtain rewards from contractors and the looting and misappropriation of public funds (Ogbondah, 2011). Falola and Heaton (2008) contend that the country's dependence on crude oil as its main source of wealth has hugely contributed to socio-economic instability as discrepancies in world oil prices and high levels of corruption among government officials have made sustainable development elusive and brought extreme poverty to a large part of the Nigerian populace. Politicians and government officials have used the oil wealth to enrich themselves and advance their political interests, leaving the country unnecessarily underdeveloped. For instance, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a leading politician in the pre-independence and post-independence Nigeria, was charged with corruption, and found guilty of diverting regional funds amounting to over five million naira (\$13, 000), which he was alleged to have used for political purposes and strengthening of the Action Group (AG) party in the western region when he was the premier of the region (Anyaele, 2003). His fellow nationalist and then premier of the eastern region, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, was earlier in 1953 also indicted by a government inquiry for using funds belonging to the region to finance his personal bank, African Continental Bank. Over the years, similar stories have been told of subsequent political leaders in the country. In the current Fourth Republic, several state governors and other categories of public office holders have been convicted for one corruption-related offence or the other,

while many more of such cases are still being tried in various courts across the country.

The corruption and inept activities of these political leaders have been widely accepted as the immediate cause of the military intervention in Nigeria (Olusoji & Oluwakemi, 2012). Military regimes in the country have always claimed that their intent was to bring an end to tribalism and corruption and ultimately restore stability and prepare the country for a transition back to civilian rule. However, military administrations have also proven to be as irresponsible as civilian governments (Anyaele, 2003; Ogbondah, 2011). Those military leaders have been adjudged autocratic and every bit as corrupt as civilian leaders. The military administrators spent lavishly, inflated contract prices, stole public funds and misappropriated public expenditures. They were self-accounting and used all manner of violence to fight any perceived opposition, including the press (Kukah, 1997; Kukah, 2014; Durojaiye, 2015).

Another defining feature of Nigeria's political space since independence is the divisive role of ethnicity. Nigeria has experienced significant inter-ethnic tensions and hostilities since independence (Ebegbukem, 2011; Daramola, 2013; Ojo, 2014; Nwafor, 2015). Ethnicity was the major factor that led to the nation's civil war between 1967 and 1970. Before and since then, the country has witnessed much ethnic violence which has led to numerous deaths and property destruction (Ebegbulem, 2011; Ayatse & Akuva, 2013).

Religion is another instrument in Nigeria's political fortunes and has proven a strong influence. With Christianity and Islam as the two dominant religions, political judgments and actions have often been coloured by religious sentiments (Salawu, 2013). In fact, within the context of politics, ethnicity overlaps with religion making it difficult at times to tell when a political conflict or tension is a product of ethnicity or religion. This stems from the fact that ethnic grouping – particularly in the context of the north-south divide – roughly corresponds with the Christian-Muslim divide (Salawu, 2013). Thus, the Hausa-Fulani in the north are predominantly Muslim while the Igbo, Yoruba and ethnic minorities of the south and Middle Belt are predominantly Christian. Thus, when the Hausa of the north, for instance, politically disagree with the Igbo of the south, it may be wrongly interpreted as a purely religious disagreement. This situation, in the words of Blench and Dendo (2003), implies that “ethnic conflicts often become rewritten as religious conflicts” (p.9).

While there is some truth in the above view, it nonetheless should be noted that, given the particularly influential nature of religion in Nigeria, both as an ideological and identity force, any attempt to rigidly classify a political phenomenon as either political or religious may be unnecessary, as religion – especially in the context of north-south divide – is merged up with politics, not as an external complement but as an essential constituent of its internal logic.

Nigeria's political structure is currently patterned after the American presidential system of electoral democracy (Anyaele, 2003). At political independence on

October 1, 1960, Nigeria was divided and operated in three regions, namely the Northern, Western and Eastern regions. However, the political journey of the country saw the splitting of the regions and the creation of twelve (12) states in 1967; increasing to nineteen (19) in 1976, twenty-one (21) in 1987, thirty (30) in 1991 and the current thirty-six (36) states in 1996. Also, in 1991, the Federal capital territory which hitherto had been Lagos was moved to Abuja (Anyaele, 2003). Lagos, however, remains the commercial nerve of the country.

On the economic front, Nigeria is known for its natural, material and human resources, including large deposits of coal, iron, tin, lead, copper and zinc; as well as petroleum reserves (Odumakin, 2003; Esimone, 2011). The country offers one of the biggest markets for the industrialized world because of its abundant resources, including oil and cash crops which have given her a very healthy economy (Dare, 2011). The leading sectors of the economy in terms of volume of investment and job creation include the oil and gas sector (it is important to note that while crude oil is the largest source of income, it is not necessarily the highest source of employment, the service industry, the entertainment industry, and the telecommunications sector. Notably, the film industry (Nollywood) adjudged to be the second leading cinema industry in the world after India's Bollywood in terms of the number of productions churned out, is the second biggest employer after the government. Mobile telecommunications are also among other economic activities which have recorded notable success stories in recent years (Open Society Foundations, 2012; Dare, 2011; Pyramid Research, 2010).

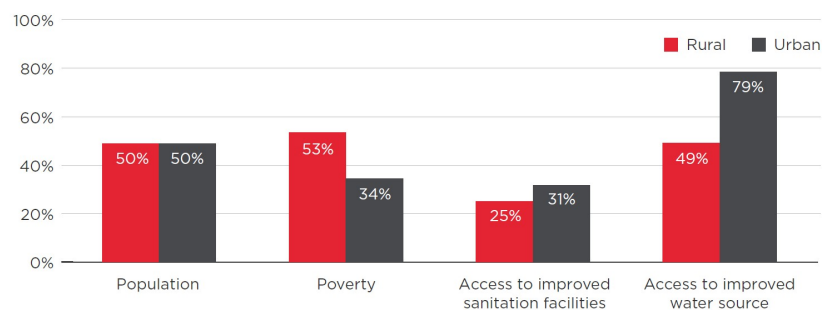


However, the bane of Nigeria's economy is its monoculture of heavy reliance on petroleum as the source of national income. Industrialization is far from being satisfactorily realized. The implication is that the nation cannot manufacture the volume and quality of goods that would strengthen her position in international trade and enable her to achieve a favourable balance of trade and balance of payment that will place her on equal pedestal with the developed nations of the world (Obi, 2003; Eyiuche, 2004; Ademola, 2010; Sanusi, 2016). Similarly, agriculture, which has been a national priority for economic growth is still largely primitive in the sense that the sophistications of modern agricultural practices as rooted in technology are yet to be satisfactorily realized in the country (Sanusi, 2016).

Another obstacle to Nigeria's economic growth is corruption. The events of Nigeria's post-independence history show that the huge inflow of oil revenues and external loans perpetuated corrupt and irresponsible administration of public funds by both civilian and military governments, leading to underdevelopment, lack of social services and inadequate infrastructure to propel the country forward (Obasanjo, 2000; Kukah, 2014; Durojaiye, 2015).

Overall, Nigeria is still largely an emerging economy. It is yet to achieve its observed potential and establish herself as a strong and sustainable economy based on the current global best standards (Obi, 2003; Eyiuche, 2004; Ademola, 2010; Sanusi, 2016). Thus, it is rightly still classified amongst the developing economies of the world.

Demographically, Nigeria is vastly heterogeneous. It is the most populated country in Africa and the seventh most populous one in the world, with just over 180 million people in 2018 (National Population Commission, 2018). Generally, most of Nigeria's population is rural and characteristically homogeneous, poor, lacking access to basic social amenities and predominately farmers. However, just as with its population growth, urbanization is occurring at a dramatic rate and currently stands at 50% (Urbanization Report Nigeria, 2015). Young people and families are migrating to the urban cities in search of better education and quality of life. Although a sizeable number (66%) of the population live in semi-urban and rural settlements, 46% of Nigerian people now live in cities (up from one-tenth in 1950 and one-third in 1990) (Urbanization Report Nigeria, 2015, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2011). Nigerian cities are largely heterogeneous; with people from other ethnicities, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds. This is true for Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Benin City, Onitsha, Awka, Enugu, Ilorin, Port Harcourt, Jos, Kaduna, Yola, Sokoto and Maiduguri.



**Figure 4:** Rural versus urban gap - equal population but socio-demographic inequalities. Source: GSMA Intelligence (2014).

Nigeria is a very diverse society in terms of ethnicity (Blench & Dendo, 2003). Three major ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba, with tens of minority groups including Ijaw, Efik, Ibibio, Anang, Edo, Bini, Urhobo, Itshekiri, Isoko, Egbira, Idoma, Tiv, Igala and Kalabari among numerous others (Nnoli, 1978; Ayatse, & Akuva, 2013; Nwafor, 2015). The Hausa/Fulani, who live in the Northern savannas, account for roughly 21 percent of the population, while the Yoruba, located in the south-western part of the country, make up 20 percent and the Igbo of the South-Eastern account for 17 per cent. Among the minority ethnic groups with relatively large populations in the country are the Ibibio (who account for 3.5% of the nation's population), the Ijaw (6.5%), the Kanuri (4.1%) and the Tiv (2.5%). In terms of religion, Nigeria's population is dominated by Islam and Christianity. Adherents of other faiths (including traditional religions) and those with no faith) account for just 10%.

The literacy level in Nigeria currently stands at 64.9% for men and 55.4% for women (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016). Improvement has, however, not been rapid enough despite the government's continuous universal basic education drives (Amzat, 2017). Most of the illiteracy cases in Nigeria are found in the northern part of the country. While all the southern states have attained high degrees of literacy with some of them like Lagos and Imo recording almost 100 percent, some states in the north, like Katsina and Sokoto, have as low as around 10 and 15 percent respectively (NBS, 2016).

The next section (2.2) examines the Nigerian media outlook. It attempts to situate the Nigerian media industry in the context of the above discussed political, economic, cultural and demographic features of the country.

## **Section 2.2. The Nigerian Media Outlook**

The Nigerian media is said to have evolved from the “bowel of party politics” (Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011, p.9). In 1846, the Nigerian print media originated from the activities of the Christian missionaries as an instrument of education and evangelization. The Nigerian broadcasting media emerged in 1932 as the Department of Post and Telegraph, Public Relations, serving as a BBC re-diffusion outpost. Then, the media were the colonial government’s exclusive preserve, advancing the colonists’ interests, especially pertaining to World War II (Daramola, 2003; Okunna & Omenugha, 2012).

However, by the 1950s, the media industry began to receive a regional and ethnic developmental framework. Golding and Elliot (1979) highlight this scenario when they observe that “through the 1950s, the formula that ‘organization of the Nigerian media is on a regional, not regionalized basis’ was gradually eroded by the facts of Nigerian political life” (p.42). This needs more explanation. This was triggered by the conflicts of media ownership, control and access (Odukomaya, 2005, p.54) as the media establishments were selective in their interest in whom to serve. For instance, the then Premier of the Western region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo was deprived access to the Nigerian Broadcasting Service

to respond to a “chiding radio broadcast” against the opposition's call for self-government (Daramola, 2003; Umechukwu, 2003).

By 1957, the print media were already well established in the hands of the Nigerian political class and serving the political interest of the nationalists who were clamouring for the nation's political independence. The Nigerian broadcasting sector, which hitherto was known as the Department of Post and Telegraph, Public Relations evolved into a separate corporation. Though intended to be a public broadcaster, never operated as one. Its set-up was different from that of its mother station, the BBC, which became the global model of public service broadcasting. The Nigerian radio and television acted as the mouthpiece of the government, or in the words of Nwuneli (1985) cited in Oso, Odunlami and Adaja (2011), governments see broadcasting “as a public relations arm of government” (p.17). This is contrary to the public service model where stations represent the interest of the public at large.

At the time of political independence, the media had already become a willing apparatus in the hands of the political class who were either the proprietors of those media houses, or were at the head of the regional governments that owned and controlled them. Thus, these powerful political figures utilized the media to fight their political and ethnic causes (Daramola, 2013; Nwafor, 2015). For example, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who regarded as one of the most successful newspaper proprietors of the time used it during Eastern Regional Crisis of 1953. Achebe writes:

Using his privately owned newspapers (West African Pilot, Nigerian Spokesman, Eastern Nigerian Guardian and Southern Nigerian Defender) and political muscle Azikiwe maligned and forced Eyo Ita and his team out of office and proceeded to pack his own cabinet with primary school teachers, ex-police corporals, sanitary inspectors and similar highly motivated disciples who were unlikely to dispute anything he said. So the rule of mediocrity from which we suffer today received an early imprimatur in Eastern Nigeria, of all places! (Achebe (1983, Pp.58-59).

At this time, newspaper companies belonged largely to individuals, whereas the government enjoyed the monopoly of the broadcast media until 1992 when the sector was deregulated (Umechukwu, 2003; Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011). Thus, individual politicians like Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo owned influential newspapers which promoted their political and ethnic-cum-regional interests.

The Western region owned the Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) which is acclaimed as the first TV station in Africa and the Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service, WNBS (radio). The Eastern Region operated the Broadcasting Corporation of Eastern Nigeria (Radio/TV), while the Northern Region operated the Northern Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (Radio/TV).

Competition among the three dominant regional-cum-ethnic blocs was reflected in the content of the different media platforms which they owned. This structure has shaped the national media landscape both politically, culturally and religiously.

With the passage of time and different socio-political processes, the ethnic coloration of the Nigerian Media has weakened. The dynamics of economics, market forces and technology had not only energised the Nigerian media space but also ushered in competition which has tended to reduce but not remove entirely the influence of ethnicity. For instance, many national newspapers, driven by their quest to maximize the potentials of the national market, now try to satisfy the diverse ethnic interests by publishing different editions for different regions, evidence that the ethnic sentiments of the newspaper owners and managers are now being challenged by economic pragmatism.

Hence, in the 2010s, economic interest emerged as an important factor driving the Nigerian media industry. Even government-owned establishments, though not purely profit-motivated, have entered into the economic competition, at least to generate part of their running costs while the government pays wages and bears the bulk of their other expenses.

Nevertheless, it would still be true to assert that the economic motive is just one of the motives driving the industry. While the sector, like many other areas, has become largely capital based, its ideology is multi-faceted, encompassing political, ethnic and religious biases. In the manifestation of their political bias, the Nigerian newspapers have been a strong voice in the struggle for democracy during military rule and are still seen as standing up in defence of human rights until today (Igbokwe, 2001). In the manifestation of their ethnic and religious bias, they have been found to be largely selective in the quantity

and quality of reports published on various ethnic and religious issues (Omenugha & Ukwueze, 2011; Ngwu, Ekwe & Chukwuma, 2013; Duru, 2014 and Nwafor, 2015). However, it would still seem that economic motive is still stronger here given that it is the nucleus of the survival of a newspaper establishment. Hence, a notable journalist and former President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), Mr. Femi Adesina, once observed that:

“the present economic reality commands that a newspaper will first need to survive and foot its bills before it can stand on its feet to fight any cause or represent any interest. You need to pay salaries to be able to retain the services of your reporters whose pen does the fighting” (Adesina, 2015, p.12).

The active private sector participation in the media industry has stimulated the nation’s economy. These private media establishments are profit-driven, serving as both business ventures and public, interest-oriented organizations. Their contents are *democratized* to capture and satisfy different sections of the society and ultimately attract the interest of advertisers. Some contents are also commercialized and sponsored by corporate organizations and independent producers. For the newspaper sector in particular, the activities of the privately-owned establishments have appeared to significantly reduce the influence of government-owned establishments. Only state governments, rather than the federal government, operate newspapers in the country today. *Daily Times*, a newspaper in which the federal government had a controlling stake, was privatized in 2003 (Adedeji, 2009).



The vibrancy of the system stems from the private players competing with state owned, community and religious run bodies, resulting in divergence of voices in socio-economic and political public discourse. Specifically, the government-owned media function to spread government policies and may not always be willing to accommodate dissenting voices while the privately-owned media are in a better position to accommodate such voices and subject government policies to scrutiny. Platforms like *'Column Guest'*, *'Letter to the Editor'*, *'Opinion Page'*, among others, are provided mostly by the private newspaper establishments to offer voices and generate responses from the populace on issues or policies of the government. Be that as it may, while the presence and activities of other categories of newspapers cannot be ignored, the privately owned national circulating dailies clearly dominate the mainstream (Adedeki, 2009).

However, unlike the newspaper press that still pays substantial attention to politics, broadcasting has increasingly become entertainment and commercially oriented (Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011). This new orientation has continued to worry scholars who noted that commercialization of content tends to undermine the practice of journalism (Okunna, 2003; Momoh, 2004a; Omenugha & Oji, 2011). In commercializing content, the media is covertly influenced and monopolized by the corporate world, ultimately giving the media an elitist coloration. This has the capacity to jettison the ethos of common good which is a hallmark of a responsible and responsive journalism.

### **Section 2.2.1 The Sociological Matrix of the Nigerian Media: The PEST Model**

The Nigerian media sector cannot be adequately understood outside the matrix of the political, economic, social and cultural experiences of the nation. Taken the political factor first, it is indubitable that the intimate and intricate relationship between media and politics (Lewis, 2005; McNair, 2011) naturally leads to the assumption that the political experiences of Nigeria must have had noticeable challenges on her media space. Research reveals that the above ethnic divisions have left their mark on the media industry in the country even as far back as the colonial era when newspapers began to show ethnic sentiments in their reportage of political developments. The early metamorphosis of newspapers in Nigeria was realised in the colonial politics of domination-resistance dialectics. Most of the early newspapers were established by nationalists and were employed as the mouthpiece of the colonised people seeking self-governance. Thus, success of the newspapers, to a large extent, hinged on the extent they were perceived as speaking for the people against the imperial government. Little wonder outspoken papers like *West African Pilot* and *Daily Times* quickly became a remarkable success. This tendency was carried through the post-independence years of military dictatorship when some media houses gained prominence for being courageous in the face of the repressions of the day. Even today, the discourse of courageous independence remains influence in acceptability of a news medium in the country. While the ideals of independence and courage are globally associated with media, it is very likely that they would be more prized in Nigeria given her continuous experience of state hostility to free press – beginning from colonialism, through the military era to the current democratic dispensation where hostility continues to

manifest. The 2018 World Press Freedom Index issued by Reporters Without Borders (2018) ranks Nigerian 119<sup>th</sup> among 180 nations surveyed.

The ethnic politics in Nigeria has also been an important factor shaping the media sector. Newspapers of the colonial period have been observed as evidencing this tendency. Their editorial slant was dictated by the ethnicity of the respective proprietors (Daramola, 2013; Nwafor, 2015). This trend has been noted to still exist today, and has been empirically established by scholars (Umechukwu, 2003; Omenugha & Ukwueze, 2011; Duru, 2014). These studies of newspaper coverage of the various ethnic and religious crises that took place in northern part of Nigeria between 1991 and 2001 discovered that newspapers showed ethnic bias in their reportage, and that this bias largely corresponded with the ethnicity of the newspaper owners. Similarly, Duru (2014), in his study of patterns of newspaper coverage of terrorism with a focus on the Boko Haram group, discovered that the ethnicity of the owners appeared to have coloured the framing of the insurgent group.

If ethnicity has added to the instability in the Nigerian political system, the repeated military interventions further accentuated the situation, leading to a stunting of democratic institutions in the country, particularly as they relate to human rights (Kukah, 2014). Daramola (2013) observes that while the Nigerian constitution contains “equivocal” provisions guaranteeing press freedom, realization of this in real terms has been frustrated by an underdeveloped democratic culture in the country. However, Daramola’s pessimism seems to have overlooked evidence of

improvement in recent years since the return of civil rule in the country in May 1999, as can be seen from verdicts from both internal and external observer bodies (Awojobi, Ayakpat & Adisa, 2014; Momoh, 2015; Abubakar, 2017). For instance, in a recent study, Awojobi, Ayakpat & Adisa (2014) observe:

The Nigeria democracy has witnessed a tremendous achievement as regard to the rule of law. Unlike the military government that has disregard for the rule of law and promulgated decree two to suppress civil right (media) activists. Among the three presidents that have governed Nigeria in the fourth republic that gave prominence to the rule of law was Yar'Adua. A case in point is that all the judgments of all court cases were obeyed to the letter and there was much independence of the judiciary (p.10).

Despite this optimism, however, the issue of press and civil rights freedom in Nigeria remains highly contested.

In the same vein, the contagious effect of corruption among some members of the ruling class has apparently not spared the nation's media sector. The inducement of journalists and media houses by politicians through all kinds of allurements have easily been the most prominent ethical issue in the discourses of media professional ethics in Nigeria (Momoh, 2004a; Okunna, 2003; Daramola, 2004). Hence, the new media, seen as a promising counterforce against the monopoly and hegemony of the traditional media, has been cited as a promising check on the excesses of the traditional journalists by way of offering alternative perspectives in cases where journalists seem to have lost their objectivity (Udeze, 2011; Udeze, Ajah & Nwosu, 2014).

While it has been acknowledged that the media have been a victim of the political situation in Nigeria, they have also been accused of having a hand in the problem by being complicit in the systemic decay and thus reinforcing such decay itself (Udeze, 2011; Daramola, 2013). Holders of this view tend to argue from the viewpoint that the media, given their sensitive and powerful position in society, are expected to always live above board no matter how tempting the situation might become. Nevertheless, such a sweeping judgment may seem to be overlooking the equally valid fact that the mass media are socially and culturally determined and therefore cannot be severed from the umbilical cord of the society in which they operate, as they receive their material from such society and so are tied to its social and cultural realities – in the positive as well as in the negative. This perspective has been amply argued by scholars like Bagdikian (1983), Gilens and Hertzman (2000) and Petley (2004). They have pointed out how the western mass media have become trapped in the capitalist structure of contemporary society such that profit motive (and not ethics and professionalism) now essentially conditions media content.

Petley (2004) in his essay, “The fourth-rate estate: Was journalism ever the democratic watchdog and champion of freedom its advocates claim?”, used the case of Australian-born media mogul, Rupert Murdoch, to paint the picture of how much the media have derailed in terms of fidelity to the traditional ideals of objectivity and independence. With vivid examples, he shows how Murdoch’s economic (and by extension political) interests have visibly determined the nature of content of his newspapers and other media establishments from the UK to China.

But one must be cautious not to take arguments like this too far, given that media's profit potential is still, to a significant extent, tied to their credibility rating in the eyes of the public. Therefore, even while the media pursue profit, they must not steer too far away off the path of modesty approved by society. Perhaps, the more correct approach would be to view the media as coming under the simultaneous influences of various political, economic and social (cultural) factors. Thus, the one that exerts greater influence at any moment would be a function of the prevailing circumstances at the material time.

The developing status of Nigeria's economy also challenges her media industry. Establishing and operating traditional media houses is capital intensive. It is implicated in the dynamics of wealth creation and distribution such as demand and supply, cost versus affordability, inflation, etc (Bagdikian, 1983; McChesney, 1989; Mosco, 2009). The interpenetration between media and economy is aptly demonstrated by the simple fact that developed countries of the world basically boast of a stronger media industry (majorly by way of size and resources) than their developing counterparts. Major newspapers and broadcast networks in Europe and America are generally larger and financially stronger than their counterparts in developing world. This disparity basically suggests that these smaller and weaker media organisations will be more likely vulnerable to disruptors (such as new media technologies), other things being equal. Despite her shortcomings, Nigeria bears a lot of economic promises largely due to huge deposits of natural resources and a very large workforce (due to very large population). Other things being equal, this promise may translate to a greater future for her media industry.

In terms of demographics, a factor like literacy is critical for print media. It has been observed that newspaper readership improved greatly in Nigeria between the 1940s and 1950s as the literacy rate increased in the country due to increasing accessibility of schools to the populace (Azikiwe, 1970; Daramola, 2003). However, this trend did not continue in the 1990s and beyond as newspaper readership began to go down so much even in the face of continuously growing literacy rate (Adedeji, 2011; Egbochukwu, 2013). This shows that other variables, apart from literacy, were having impact. These may include the increasing penetration of radio and television among the populace which offered to them alternative sources of news and other contents. New media technologies came much later.

Literacy as a factor also relates to gender given that the literacy rate is higher among men than women in Nigeria – 69.4% and 55.4% respectively (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Incidentally, newspaper readership is concentrated in the male population (as shown by Okunna & Omenugha, 2012; Eze, 2017), but the contribution of the gender literacy gap to this trend may not be very significant as male readers continue to dominate overwhelmingly even in southern Nigeria where the literacy gap between males and females in many states is insignificant. An important determinant factor here may be women's preference for softer contents (such as entertainment, fashion, life etc.) as against news content which research such as Okunna & Omenugha (2012) has found in Nigeria. So, television, which tends to offer more entertainment, becomes of greater attention to this segment of the population (Agboola, 2014). The implication of this trend is that Nigerian

newspapers continue to be denied patronage of a significant chunk of the population they ought to serve.

The ethnic and religious demographics of the audience also affect shape of the media industry in Nigeria. Ethnicity has been shown to affect media content (Daramola, 2013; Nwafor, 2015) while religion has also had its impact, as is evident in the more culturally conservative content found in electronic media and newspapers with predominantly northern audiences, as contrasted with the more liberal content associated with those of those serving mostly a southern audience (Daramola, 2013). Thus, the influence of these demographics is felt both on the side of the producers and on the side of the consumers of the media industry. Ethnicity and religion are also interwoven with literacy as about 70% of Nigeria's literate population is found among the southern ethnic groups who are also dominantly Christian (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). So, little wonder newspapers sales are concentrated in the south (Eze, 2017).

To summarise, the Nigerian media industry does not subsist in a vacuum; it is rooted in a matrix of political, economic, social and technological nature. To illustrate this, the researcher develops and puts forward a **Political, Economic, Social and Technological (PEST)** model to demonstrate the ways in which these factors create possible impact (see the diagram below). The media's relationship with each of these factors is both intrinsic and dialectical; each of them creates and is created by media. First, regarding the political factor, media is both a product and source of power; in other words, while it is an instrument of politics it is also conditioned by



politics economic terms, media is an endeavour in wealth creation and at the same time is a product of the wealth creation process itself. In other words, like every production process in society, media production is entrapped in the societal economic dynamics, which influences it and is in turn influenced by it. Regarding the social factor, media cannot be viewed outside its surrounding cultural, demographic and other related determinants. However, these determinants are at the same time shaped by media itself. In the same vein, media is technology-driven, but at the same is inscribed in technology. Stated differently, while technology creates media, this creation is as well in response to the creative and technical imperative of media. These dynamics are all evident in the discussion so far in this section.

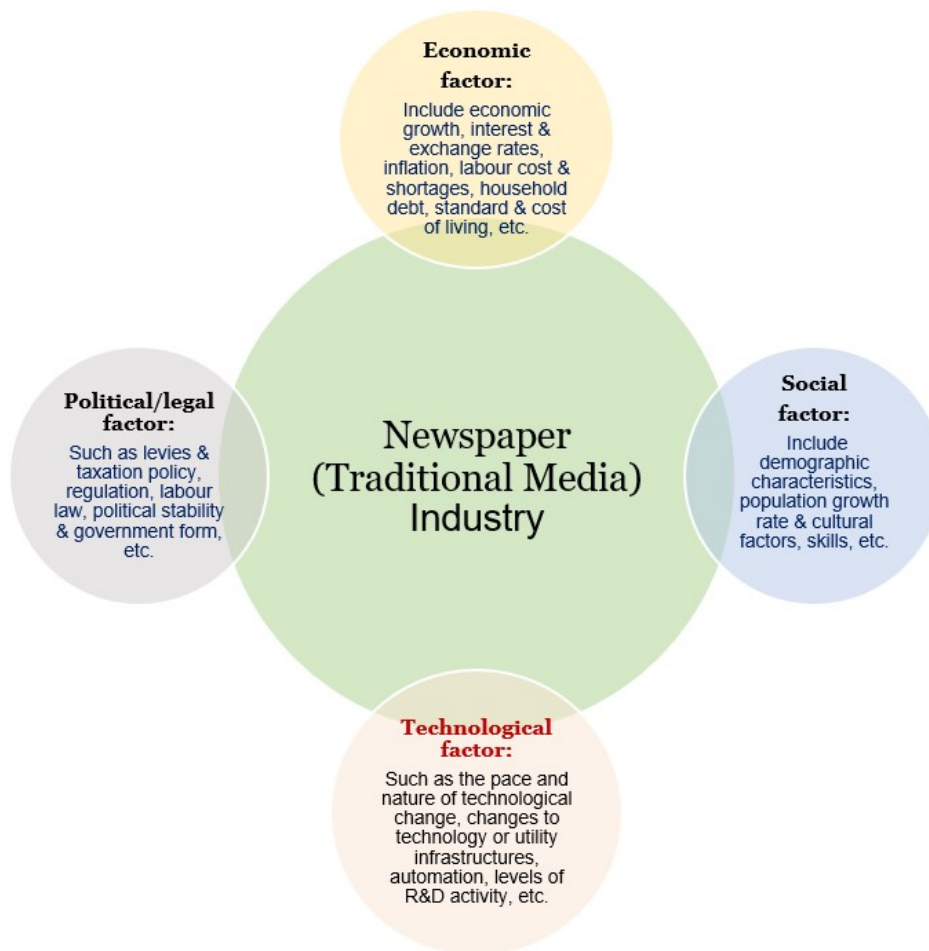


Figure 2: PEST Model to demonstrate influencing factors for a typical Newspaper (media) industry (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).

In conclusion, the foregoing discourse shows that the Nigerian media industry, like others elsewhere, embodies and is embedded in the political, economic, social and technological matrix prevailing in society. Therefore, it is faced with both opportunities and challenges entailed by these elements acting individually and collectively.

### Section 2.3 Contemporary Nigerian Newspaper Industry

Currently, the newspaper industry in the country is dominated by a number of daily publications generally referred to as “national dailies” given their countrywide circulation. These publications are privately owned except for *New Nigerian* which is jointly owned by the government of the northern states of the country. The newspaper was established before independence by the Northern Regional government against the backdrop of the regional cum ethnic politics of those days.

However, with the regions broken into states, the newspaper became a joint establishment of the states that made up the old Northern Region. Each among the 21 states appointed a representative on the board that ran the paper. Very popular among the national dailies today are *The Punch*, *The Nation*, *The Sun*, *Vanguard*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Trust* and *Daily Times* among others - all in all 21 in number as of December 2016 (NPAN, 2017). There are also weekly newspapers owned by each of the 36 state governments in the country whose circulation is largely limited to the territories of the respective states. These papers are run directly and funded by the state governments through their Ministry of Information, and like state government-owned broadcast houses, their reportage is emphatically slanted in favour of the respective governments who use them as their mouthpiece (Onoja, 2005). Then other fringe publications (largely weekly, biweekly and monthly) are operated by organizations, religious bodies and town unions. For instance, religious bodies like the Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal Churches own papers like *Leader*, *Trinitas*, *The Dove*, *The Redeemer*, *Salvation* etc, while newspapers like *Rights Advocate*, *New Liberator*, *The Democrats* and *The Budget Monitor* belong to some

civil society groups and human rights bodies. However, the national dailies form the mainstream claiming the largest chunk of readership and revenue (Adedeji, 2009).

The Nigerian media space is characterized by vibrancy and resilience (Odunlami, 2004). These combined factors had earned the press its place as a critical player that influenced the return of democracy to Nigeria in May 1999 (Igbokwe, 2001; Olukotun, 2002). During the military eras which attempted to restrict and muzzle press freedom and activities, the Nigerian media manifested a strong will for survival. According to Oso (2006), this era ushered in guerrilla journalism with publications like *Tempo*, *The News*, *Razor*, and included Radio Kudirat in the broadcast industry. These media operated in an unconventional way which involved publishing in secret and makeshift locations to evade the hostile security agencies; these strategies rendered them irrepressible critics of the brutal regimes (Igbokwe, 2001). William (2006) describes a Nigerian guerrilla journalist as “an insurgent with mobile typewriter who operated outside the laws as an intellectual sniper.” Oso, Odunlami and Adaja (2011) note that the media adopted a two-pronged strategy comprising a “balanced admixture of defiant progressive advocacy, on the one hand, and a surfeiting dose of pro-establishment developmental journalism on the other” (p.17). These combined methods saw a part of the media rebelling and agitating, while the other part advocated and networked (Olukotun, 2002) to obstruct authoritarian government and promote civil governance (Ekpu, 1999).

The provisions of Chapter 2, Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution have further added impetus to the media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm of governance.

The section specifically states that:

The Press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.

Despite this constitutional position and proclamation, scholars and practitioners have found it flawed, noting that the declaration is too generalized and non-judiciable (Oso, Odunlami & Adaja, 2011, p.17). Others point to other Nigerian Statute books with a number of laws of colonial origin that are injurious to the press (Momoh, 2000; Okoro, 2012). They include: the Official Secrets Act (1962), the Press Registration Act (1933), the Newspaper Act (1917), the Emergency Powers Act (1961), and the Seditious Meeting Act (1961). These laws are seen as a tactic by the government to abridge press freedom, particularly the journalist's liberty to criticize the government and its officials. For instance, the Press Registration Act required newspaper houses to submit an advance copy of their publication to the Ministry of Information for vetting before it could be authorized to circulate it. This meant that the government stood as censoring authority that determined what a newspaper could disseminate or not.

Similarly, the law expected a newspaper organization to be registered with the government in order to be able to publish legally. Failure of a newspaper organization to obtain such registration or failure to get approval before circulating

an edition would earn the officers of such organization terms of imprisonment ranging from two to five years. This law was later amended under the military regimes and it became known as the Newspaper Registration Act. The provisions were essentially the same as the previous legislation except in some minor amendments related to administrative processes in enforcing the law. However, in 1995, a Federal High Court in the case of *The Guardian v. Attorney General of the Federation* declared this law unconstitutional and therefore null and void (Momoh, 2004a).

Notwithstanding these attempts to muzzle them, the Nigerian newspapers remain relatively stable and a dominant medium. The print media establishments (including newspapers) which went out of business (such as *The West African Pilot*, *Concord*, *Post Express*, *Satellite*, *The Comet*, *Mirror* and numerous others) had done so on account of economic problems facing Nigeria and not due to media shifts. In the 1990s, the country witnessed an enormous deterioration in the economic situation characterized by high inflation, closure of industries, high unemployment and poverty (Umechukwu, 2003; Obi, 2003; Eyiuche, 2004; Ademola, 2010). Some newspapers succumbed to this harsh economic situation and the efforts of the government to muzzle freedom of the press. Presenting a keynote address to the 2017 Nigerian Guild of Editors conference held at Presidential Hotel, Port Harcourt, South-South, Nigeria, the Managing Director of *The Interview Magazine*, Azubuike Ishiekwene, noted that in the last twenty years, many newspapers and magazines have stopped publishing for various reasons. Ishiekwene listed 25 defunct newspapers and magazines as follows; *Diet*, *National Interest*, *Tempo*, *Fame*,

*Financial Standard, Hints, Concord, Sketch, Newswatch, Compass, NEXT, Triumph, Herald, New Nigerian, Third Eye, Tide, Metropole, Monitor, National Life, New Age, Examiner, Union, Comet, Post Express and Sunray* (Media Career Services, 2017). As Ishiekwene did not state which factors were responsible for the closure of these newspapers, this study contends that an array of factors, including technology have contributed in influencing the management of Nigerian newspapers.

The geopolitical zonal structuring of Nigeria into North-East (NE), North-Central (NC), North-West (NW), South-East (SE), South-West (SW) and South-South (SS) is of implications to operation of the newspaper industry. Newspaper management now takes cognizance of these divisions especially as is national dailies have their bureaus on a zonal basis. All these offices constitute administrative units for coordinating editorial and revenue affairs within states that come under each zone (Adedeji, 2009). They are next to the headquarters to which the bureau chiefs report while the state offices report to the bureaus.

Similarly, the rate of newspaper circulation and readership differ from zone to zone. The South-West (SW) (largely due to the presence of Lagos State, the country's hub of media activities and officially the second most populous state) is the leader, leadership in readership or circulation, or both, and is readership synonymous with proximity to circulation or literacy? followed by the South-East (SE), the South-South (SS), the North-Central (NC), the North-West (NW) and the North-East (NE) (Adedeji, 2009; Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), 2017).

Each of the national daily newspapers has zone(s) where its readership and acceptability are stronger or strongest. This is usually determined by such newspaper's assumed favourable coverage of issues that align with particular ethnic groups or groups that dominate the said zone. Hence, it is often the case that a newspaper may be more accepted in the zone where the proprietor comes from. For instance, *The Sun* is the most accepted paper in the SE where the proprietor, Orji Uzor Kalu comes from; *The Nation* and *The Punch* are mostly read in the SW where the respective proprietors, Bola Tinubu and James Aboderin, come from; *Vanguard* is read mostly in the SE, though the proprietor, Sam Amuka Pemu, is from the SS which is second only to the SE in terms of its readership; and *Daily Trust* is the most popular in the NE, NW and NC where most of the proprietors come from (the paper is owned by a group of investors). This same applies to most other national newspapers (Adedeji, 2009; Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN, 2017). A deviation in this apparently ownership-acceptance paradigm is the *Vanguard* which, though widely accepted in the SE, has a proprietor who comes from the SS. This acceptance probably may be due to historical, political, cultural and geographical ties between the SE and the SS. A large portion of the SS territory, together with the SE, made up the administrative unit known as the Eastern region, which alongside the Western and Northern (and later Mid-Western) regions were the federating units in Nigeria until 1967. Also, a large portion of the SS population is Igbo, the same ethnic group that make up the SE.

However, there are other newspapers whose readership is restricted to particular states and/or zones. As such, they are not considered national newspapers or part



of the mainstream. They include newspapers owned by state governments, religious bodies, and individuals with smaller investments (Daramola, 2003; Umechukwu, 2003). Nevertheless, the national dailies have continued to push towards improving their readership in all zones, apparently to maximise profits. A particular strategy to this effect as adopted by some newspapers is to publish several editions each day with each edition carrying front page news considered to be of interest to the particular geopolitical zone it is meant for. For instance, *The Sun* edition for the South-East has in recent years copiously carried front page news on the activities of Igbo separatist groups - Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) as ethnic sentiments soared high in the zone. Such an editorial slant is intended to appeal to the dominantly Igbo readership. Thus, political structuring-cum-ethnic sentiment becomes crucial to newspaper management in Nigeria.

The next section - an overview profile of the selected national newspapers - provides background information on some of the contemporary newspapers that this study focuses on. This study investigates how Nigerian newspaper houses have carried on with their operations in the face of disruptive technologies. As earlier encapsulated, disruptive technologies denote those digital and interactive gadgets and platforms that unsettle, change and challenge (irrespective of whether they are innovating, transforming, stabilizing or not) the conventional and the routine medium of communication. Specifically, the study's focus is on four contemporary Nigerian national newspapers namely: *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Times* and *The Daily Trust*. These newspapers were selected to ensure proper representation

as per the comparative influence of each of the papers across the geopolitical zones of the country as earlier discussed. Of key importance in this study is the engagement with the managers of the newspapers through interviews to interrogate their encounters with disruptive technologies within their media organizations. As noted by Adedeji (2009), these newspapers have a national outlook, enjoy wide readership and strong influence in both the Northern and Southern regions of the country. Therefore, the following section would be highlighting their basic histories and activities.

### **Section 2.3.1 An Overview profile of the selected national newspapers**

This section provides background information on the select newspaper samples for analysis.

#### **Section 2.3.1.1 *The Sun* Newspaper**

*The Sun* Newspaper, also known as *The Daily Sun*, is one of Nigerian national daily print newspapers. It was founded and incorporated on March 29, 2001 by Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu, a former governor of Abia State, SE, Nigeria, the newspaper has Lagos, SW, as both its headquarters and place of publication. It commenced production on January 18, 2003, originally as a weekly newspaper, but on June 16, 2003 emerged as a daily publication. By the year 2011, *The Sun* Newspaper was adjudged to have a daily print run of 130,000 copies, and 135,000 weekend titles, with an average of 80% sales, arguably, becoming the highest-selling newspaper in Nigeria. The newspaper shares the same features in layout as the popular Sun newspaper of the United Kingdom, targeting young adults between the ages of 18 and 45. It also

features fresh viewpoints on politics, economy, crime, religion, sports, arts and culture. The publishing company also has online presence as it uses various social media and web platforms and services to target, reach and engage the readers.

The first Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief was Mike Awoyinfa. In January 2010, Tony Onyima succeeded Awoyinfa. Onyima was replaced in December 2013 by Femi Adesina. The current Managing Editor/Editor-in-Chief is Eric Osagie who succeeded Adesina in June 2015.

#### **Section 2.3.1.2 *The Nation* Newspaper**

The *Nation* newspaper was founded on July 31, 2006. With its general administrative headquarters in Lagos, the vision of the paper is 'to be Nigeria's newspaper of first choice among discerning readers'. *The Nation* newspaper is one of the National dailies with nationwide offline circulation which it achieves by having simultaneous printing in three locations: Lagos, Abuja and Rivers State. This is also facilitated by the two sets of GOSS Community Web Press that the company has in Lagos, and one each in the other locations, apart from the Indian FAST 300 Web Press in Abuja and Port Harcourt. Moreover, it has pre-press facilities, including a Heidelberg CTP machine and a Kodak CTP machine in Lagos, as well as two Kodak CTPs each in both Abuja and Rivers state. Part of its strength includes its compact layout and colourful pages which could be credited to these state-of-the-art facilities. *The Nation* also has a visible online presence, including owning a website and several social media platforms where new stories, commentaries, photos and videos are published and shared. Presently driven by an online

managing editor, Lekan Otufodunrin, who updates and uploads breaking news and other content onto the website and social media platforms. The electronic version of the print edition is also available for download along with a video channel. Currently, the paper has a modest staff number of over 250 employees, and despite its relatively young age, it ranks among the leading newspapers in the country. In a 2009 survey, *The Nation* was adjudged the second-most-read newspaper in Nigeria, and this result was repeated in a 2011 report by The Advertisers' Association of Nigeria (ADVAN). The newspaper and staff have also won several media awards including newspaper of the year in 2012 and 2013. Guided by its editorial philosophy, 'A quality, national, newspaper with credible and dependable information. Not beholden to any interest group. Loyalty is to the nation', the paper has also established itself as authoritative, influential and credible (The *Nation* Newspapers Limited, 2018, p.1). The paper's content covers a wide variety of subjects presented under the following columns: including Business and Economy, Public Policies, The Democratic Process and Institutions of Democracy, Sports, Arts and Culture, Fashion and Lifestyle, World Affairs, Education, Health, Law and Commentaries. The mission of the newspaper includes:

1. To provide the general public with information they need for efficient democratic participation and realisation of their human rights.
2. To campaign for realisation of a strong federal system of government in Nigeria in the belief that it is the most suitable arrangement for managing and satisfying the yearnings of the diverse peoples of the country.
3. To serve as an independent watchdog that will promote accountability among those entrusted with the power of governance in Nigeria (The *Nation* Newspapers Limited, 2018, p.1).

The paper has been a major critic of government policies, especially on matters of administrative style and the economy. There have also been government efforts to

clampdown on the paper and its influence in the media space. On June 2014, barely six weeks before the paper's eighth anniversary, the government, using soldiers and State Security Service (SSS) agents, launched a major clampdown on vocal private newspapers, including *The Nation*, *The Punch*, *Leadership*, *Daily Trust*, *Vanguard*, *National Mirror*, *Newswatch*, *Business Day*, *Complete Sports* and *Osun Defender*, under the guise of fighting terrorism. Adagboyega (2016) recounted that the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) notes:

Federal troops across Nigeria seized and destroyed newspaper deliveries at airports, commandeered newspaper vehicles along highways, seized control of distribution points in several cities, and confiscated newspapers from vendors. They also harassed and assaulted newspaper staff and took money from at least one (p.1).

Observers likened the incident to Nigeria "slowly edging back to the dark days of military dictatorship." However, in a belated show of remorse, the government later turned around to 'compensate' the newspapers. Unfortunately, *The Nation*, like most of the other newspapers that took money (compensation) for the disruption of their business activities for about five days eventually returned the money when it was discovered that it had come from the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), following the probe of the Dasuki arms deals.

Since its establishment, *The Nation* has been administered by different individual editors, managing different components of the resources – employees, materials, machineries and monies to achieve its organizational vision and mission.

### Section 2.3.1.3 The *Daily Times* Newspaper

The *Daily Times* Newspaper was founded on June 6, 1925 by Richard Barrow, Adeyemo Alakija and other European interest groups. However, it was first printed on June 1, 1926. The newspaper was one of the popular voices during the nationalist movement in the country. In 1934, the newspaper featured an editorial that opposed Native Authority schools, which it saw as controlled by stooges of the colonial administration, and advocated independent mission schools. It was outspokenly hostile towards colonial rule and played an important role in the process that led to Nigeria's independence in 1960. In 1963 and with the indigenization policy of the Government, the ownership of the *Daily Times* newspaper was gradually transferred to Nigerians, a process that was completed by March 31, 1974. The newspaper had also dominated the Nigerian publishing industry with its publication and magazines, *Modern Woman* and *the Flamingo*; such that by 1975, it recorded a circulation of 275,000 copies while the *Sunday Times* reached 400,000. No other Nigerian newspaper has achieved such levels except MKO Abiola's *Daily Concord* in the early 1990s.

On September 1, 1975, the Federal Government of Nigeria acquired 60% ownership and equity of the newspaper and that of its major competitor, the *New Nigerian Newspaper*. A government statement to this effect read:

The Federal Military Government wants to state that its acquisition of the total ownership of New Nigeria and equity (60%) of DTN [Daily Times Nigeria] will in no manner control the independence of the newspapers published by the 2 establishments. Government wants to underline its policy of full support of press freedom at all times (Pixel, 2019), p.2).

However, the government's effort was seen as a design to control and reduce media influence and criticism of the military government. This seems to have been the case, because the government assumed total ownership and control of the *Daily Times* newspaper in 1977. This challenged the newspaper's editorial independence and led to a steady decline in its circulation, especially in 1990s as the administrations of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha tightened control over the newspaper. The public had turned to other active independent publications.

In 2003, under the civilian administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, the *Daily Times* newspaper was advertised for sale to private ownership. In 2004, Folio Communications was approved as the preferred bidder, acquiring ownership control of the newspaper with 96.5% of shares. However, liability issues such as lawsuits, non-payment of previous workers, obsolete facilities and buildings limited the immediate take over and operation by the company. It formally took over the newspaper on March 14, 2007. Owned by Fidelis Anosike, with its headquarters in Abuja, National Capital Territory, Folio Communication, current publishers of the *Daily Times*, utilize new media technologies and different online platforms in the production and distribution of its various media content.

#### **Section 2.3.1.4 The *Daily Trust* Newspaper**

The *Daily Trust* newspaper started as a weekly paper called *Weekly Trust*; which was published on Fridays in 1998. Who owns Daily Trust? However, on January 15, 2001,

The *Daily Trust* newspaper emerged as a national daily publication, publishing from Monday to Friday and then much later, on Sundays as well. In between, there was *Aminiya*; a weekly Hausa newspaper. Printed and published by Media Trust Nigeria Limited, *Daily Trust* was the first daily newspaper from the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nigeria. It also has a weekly title, the *Weekly Trust* newspaper. The content of the newspaper is arguably considered innovative, versatile and market driven. It also utilizes different online platforms and sites to share different media contents. The newspaper has four presses in Abuja, FCT; Lagos, Kano, and Maiduguri. It is adjudged influential and the largest circulating newspaper in Northern Nigeria.

#### Section 2.4 Nigeria and Global Internet Ranking

This subsection examines Nigerian society within the context of global internet penetration and usage. In this regard, one significant fact to highlight is that advent of the Internet in Nigeria has followed the same pattern as most other modern technologies; it was imported from the west, with the implication that the nation trailed behind the developed countries in terms of adoption, penetration and technical efficiency in relation to the Internet. In fact, this is a character the nation largely shares with other African countries (Agba, 2001; Mdlongwa, 2009; Smith, 2009; Nyirenda-Jere & Biru, 2015). However, countries of the continent are not equal in terms of Internet penetration and accessibility; while some have made impressive progress others are still much lagging behind.



The 1980s, according to Sadowsky, Barrett, Greenberg, Quaynor and Dandjinou (2016), are crucial in the history of the Internet in Africa being the era when computer “networks began to appear across Africa with NGOs and universities playing a pivotal role in building infrastructure and developing capacity” (p.1). While these were strictly offline networks, they must have provided the initial infrastructural base for take-off of the web in later years. By the early 1990s when much of Europe and the US were already experiencing high levels of Internet penetration, the technology was virtually absent on the continent save for a few isolated cases in countries like South Africa, Tunisia and Nigeria. This trend may be connected to the fact that these countries are large economic enclaves where businesses and firms found the Internet an attractive innovation. This claim may be reinforced by the fact that in Nigeria, businesses were the first to embrace Internet innovations (Agba, 2001). Among the landmark events that eventually accelerated the development of the Internet in the region was in 1993 when the Internet Society organized a training workshop in San Francisco. This workshop was aimed at assisting various African countries in connecting to the Internet, and it subsequently became an annual event helping to create awareness among important stakeholders, as well as developing human resources required for the operation of sustainable Internet sectors on the continent (Sadowsky, Barrett, Greenberg, Quaynor & Dandjinou, 2016).

In Nigeria, 1995 was an important year as the Nigerian Internet Group (NIG) was formed. NIG, a non-governmental, non-profit organization has the primary objective of promoting access to the Internet in Nigeria. The group, comprising

experts and other crucial stakeholders, was largely responsible for early awareness creation and for providing guidance for the emergence of a public Internet policy in the country (Agba, 2001).

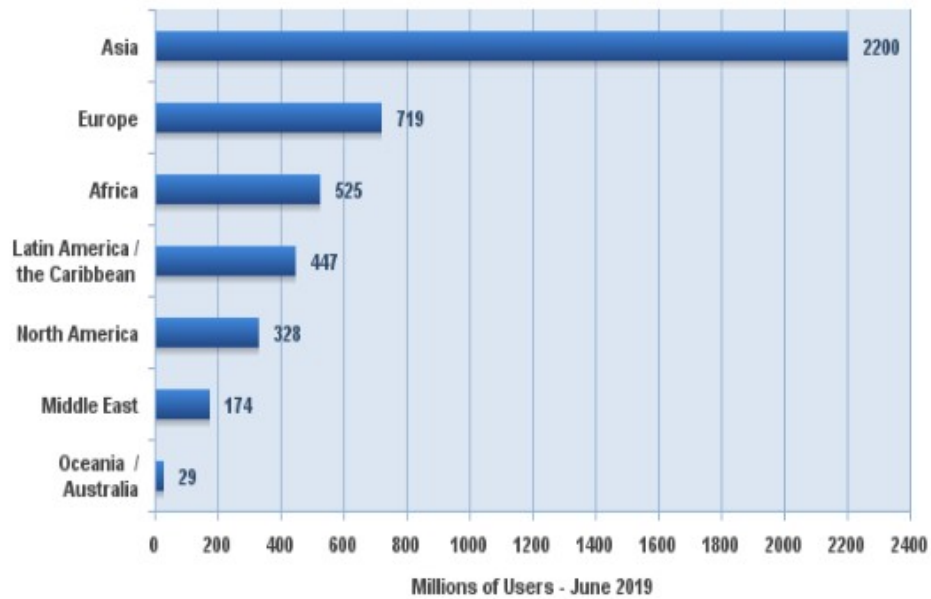
Significant to the entire continent was the Regional African Conference on Internet Governance which was held in Cotonou, Benin Republic, in December 1998. This conference became the central stage for the establishment of African Network Information Centre (AFRINIC). AFRINIC is the body responsible for distribution and management of Internet number resources i.e. Internet Protocol (IP) address space and Autonomous Systems Numbers (ASNs) in Africa (Agba, 2001; Sadowsky *et al.*, 2016).

However, Internet penetration in Africa was very slow in those early days. The most constraining factors were infrastructural problems, particularly an acute shortage of telephone lines. Nevertheless, in the 2000s, Internet access was boosted by the tremendous increase in telephone lines across the continent (Nyirenda-Jere & Biru, 2015). This was the time Nigeria saw the arrival of the Global System on Mobile (GSM) telecommunications which ultimately led to the current explosion of Internet access in the country. Nyirenda-Jere and Biru (2015) note that “despite a slow start, Internet use is now rapidly accelerating, and its transformative effects are increasingly accessible” (p2).

Nevertheless, Internet access is hardly evenly distributed amongst the countries of the region. Kenya, the Seychelles and Tunisia have the highest penetration rates

standing at 87.2%, 72.5% and 66.8% respectively, as of December 31 2019. Other countries enjoying penetration rate of more than 50% include Libya (74.2%), Mali (61.6%), Mauritius (67%), Morocco (64.3%), Nigeria (61.2%) South Africa (55%), and Saint Helena (54.3%). But at the other end of the spectrum are countries where the penetration rate is around or below 10%, such as Somalia (10.7%), Madagascar (9.5%), Western Sahara (4.7%), and Eritrea (1.4%) (Internet World Stats, 2019). The foregoing data suggests multiplicity of determinant variables; there appears to be a combination and not just a single factor shaping rate of Internet penetration in the continent. For instance, looking at Kenya, the Seychelles, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritius, Nigeria and South Africa, one may say these countries are some of the best performing economically, a factor that may be responsible for their superior penetration vis-à-vis others like Somalia, Eritrea and Western Sahara. On the other hand, the fact that countries like Mali and Kenya have significantly higher penetration than South Africa does not suggest a strictly economic determinant. Apart from the general economic performance, standard of living is one aspect of economic performance that appears to have been influential, being that, of the 11 countries that have recorded up to 54% penetration, only Nigeria and Mali are rated low in human development index (HDI), only Kenya is rated medium, while the eight others are rated high. On the whole, while there may be exceptions here and there, it is safe to say that economic performance is a key variable in Internet accessibility in Africa.

### Internet Users in the World by Geographic Regions - 2019 JUNE - Updated



Source: Internet World Stats - [www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm](http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm)  
Basis: 4,422,494,622 Internet users estimated in June 30, 2019  
Copyright © 2019, Miniwatts Marketing Group

**Figure 3:** Internet Users in the World by Geographic Regions (Internet World Stats, 2019).

Current global statistics show that Africa has the lowest Internet penetration in the world with a cumulative rate of 39.8%. She stands far below North America (95%), Europe (86.8%), Oceania/Australia (68.4 %), Latin America/Caribbean (68.0%) and the Middle East (67.2%). She is also bettered by Asia whose rate stands at 51.9% (Internet World Stats, 2019).

However, Africa's Internet penetration position has been criticized by some scholars. For Anyanwu (2019, p.174), the internet penetration 'data and media coverage of Africa, have often been flawed' and merely been used by the West to

‘consolidate negative stereotypes’ of the continent’s technological backwardness. He further notes that this flaw in measurement of internet penetration comes from the ‘focuses on calculating the number of people in a community who have access to digital technologies, rather than focus on understanding how information is shared among communities’ (p.177). Moreover, Lancaster (2017) recognises topographical challenges, rather than lack of interest or access, as the factor that defines Africa’s telecommunication platforms. In that study, Henry Lancaster identified Nigeria as having Africa’s largest mobile market, with about 149 million subscribers, and a penetration rate of 107%. This figure completely contradicts the 2016 data from International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which claimed that 75% of Africa was offline.

While this thesis is not implying that internet has fully penetrated the African countries, it does support claims by studies such as Nyirenda-Jere & Biru; (2015), Lancaster (2017), Internet World Stats (2018) and Anyanwu (2019) which opine that Africa has by far the highest Internet growth rate in the world. This, according to Nyirenda-Jere and Biru (2015) is as a result of “accumulated efforts of dedicated technologists, businesses, policy makers, civil society and individuals” which are now bearing fruit by way of “improved outcomes and laying the ground for the social and economic benefits that the Internet can bring” (p2).

As Internet usage becomes increasingly prevalent among African populations, it is having a corresponding radical impact on free expression and political rights. The Arab Spring, which commenced in 2011 in Tunisia and spread to some other North

African countries (including Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Morocco) and the Middle East was an eloquent testimony to the power of the Internet to inspire and mobilise social action (Nyirenda-Jere & Biru, 2015). However, the political and social crises that followed the overthrow of the regimes, especially in Libya and Egypt perhaps also bear witness to the fact that Internet penetration alone does not make a revolution. In fact, Garba (2012) is of the opinion that the Arab Spring is evidence of the fact that while the Internet may be very effective in dismantling an existing political order, it may not be that effective in building new institutions. The advent of the Internet is also affecting the socio-economic sector in African countries, redefining the strategies and ethos of businesses (Mdlongwa, 2009). In the media sector, Africa is profoundly feeling the impact of the Internet, with traditional media houses all around the continent being compelled to adapt to the imperatives of the new media era in terms of content production and distribution (Mdlongwa, 2009; Smith, 2009).

Generally, while Africa is still an emerging Internet industry area, the realities of the new epoch are already being felt strongly on the continent and her social structures. This creates an imperative for adjustments across all sectors. In the media sector, the warning has long been sounded that “African media leaders should be preparing for this already emerging scenario” (Mdlongwa, 2009, p.2).

However, the question might still be asked whether Africa’s new media experience must necessarily reflect the western experience. In other words, do new media technologies represent similar experiences and need for Africans as it does for

Europeans or Americans? This question stems from the obvious differences in the political, economic and cultural experiences of the West and Africa which might alter the nature and extent of the challenge new media technologies present to the two geographical spheres. While no definite answer may be immediately found, it would appear from the discussion so far that given the central role of the Internet in ongoing globalization, new media technology represents for Africa, an indispensable avenue for global economic, political and cultural participation.

### Section 2.5 The New Media Technologies and Newspaper Industry

The concept of new media technologies developed in the latter part of the 20th century with the advancement of science and technology. According to Domingo and Heinone (2008), new media technology is a form of global media emboldened by the internet that merges traditional media with interactive digital communication technologies. New media technologies are internet-enabled, digital, interactive, manipulative, dense, compressible and networkable. At a very timely manner and speed, these technologies connect and channel communication that delivers information and services to people. According to McQuail (1994), the main features that characterize new media are:

- a. decentralization of an encoded content;
- b. a higher transmission capacity that overcomes the former restrictions of cost, distance and capacity;
- c. interactivity; as the receiver can select, answer back, exchange and be linked to other receivers directly; and
- d. flexibility in deciding on content and usage patterns (1994, Pp.21).

The above features will correctly describe “new media” if they can be shown to significantly depart from the essential features of “old media”. This is visibly true of

the four features – decentralisation, higher transmission capacity, interactivity and flexibility. But perhaps to be added to these features is multiple content formats, as new media platforms flexibly offer content in text, photo, video and audio formats. This is also related to convergence which allows a communication device to embody multiplicity of platforms such as newspaper, radio, TV, book and social media among others.

New media technology evolution was rapid, radical and one that added great impetus to globalization through providing information superhighways that could connect peoples, nations and cultures in a manner never experienced before (Agba, 2002; Okorie, 2017). Digital platforms are now offered through which media contents are accessed on-demand, irrespective of time and place.

It also generates interactive-user feedback, creative participation and communal formation around media content. Sean Tunney and Garrett Monaghan (2010) note that cyber sphere “affords unbounded, non-geographic, non-ethnic, non-nationalist access to citizens” (p.63). New media technologies break boundaries and frontiers, reaching every part of the world (Asemah, 2011; Osunade, 2013; GSMA Intelligence report, 2015; Okorie, 2017).

The presence of new media technologies has consequences for the socio-economic and political lives of the people. Franke and Schreier (2002) argue that new media technologies serve as a new product development tool for producers and people in all kinds of industries. In the entertainment industry, new media technologies



provide platforms for entertainers to present their crafts as well as showcase their talents and services to their fans. In politics, the impact of new media has also been tremendously felt. Kaul (2013) notes that new media technologies serve as powerful tools which politicians leverage to establish and build better understanding with their existing and potential supporters.

Ultimately, new media has increased participation in mass communication and empowered people to create, modify and share content with others, using digital tools that are often free or inexpensive. For example, media content published on social networks goes viral in a matter of minutes, and brings huge traffic to such a site and, by extension, to such message/information. Through user-generated interactive media platforms (blogs and websites), people are able to co-create and co-transmit communication contents. New media has changed the hitherto one-way mass communication process and provided people with platforms for expressing themselves (Cary, 2010; Culver, 2010; Nwanne, 2016).

New media has *democratized* the creation, publication, storage, distribution and consumption of media content (Adigwe, 2012; Agbobli and Fusaro, 2015). Its easy accessibility, availability and the speed in relaying messages to any part of the globe makes it a perfect tool for news gathering, processing and dissemination.

However, the advent of new media has posed a challenge to traditional media, particularly the printed newspaper (Domingo and Heinonen, 2008; Yap, 2009; Ikpe and Olise, 2010; Ige, 2013). The way newspapers obtain, produce and circulate their

news has been greatly affected by the New Media. Since 1999, 90% of the daily newspapers in the United States of America have been actively using online technologies to search for articles and most of them also generate their own news websites to reach new markets (Saksena and Hollifield, 2002; Ali *et al.*, 2011).

According to Martha Mccaughey and Ayers (2003):

“the internet is immediate, even more immediate than a daily newspaper. It can be more interactive than television. Not since the Institutionalization of the US Postal Service have we seen a communication development in the society that can give power to individuals like this (Pp.4).

The Internet has made physical presence much less significant for many activities. Not only has the new media digitalized the media content into bits, it also brought dynamic life to new media content which is accessed in real time. The technical capacity of the new media essentially distinguishes it from other forms of traditional media including the newspaper (Soola, 1998; Yap, 2009; Brydon, 2011; Osunade, 2013). The traditional (mainstream) mass media are characteristically highly centralized, require substantial investment and resources for operation and can be heavily influenced by government through various state regulatory apparatus and other forms of control (Banerjee, 2008; Ige, 2013). In fact, the new media represents a radical liberalization of the public communication space as observed by Abaji (2009):

The Internet now ensures that individuals and institutions can, at minimal cost, become media gatekeepers. Any Internet-literate user can now set up personal sites for news publication as well as video and sound streaming. This is what is meant by independent or alternative

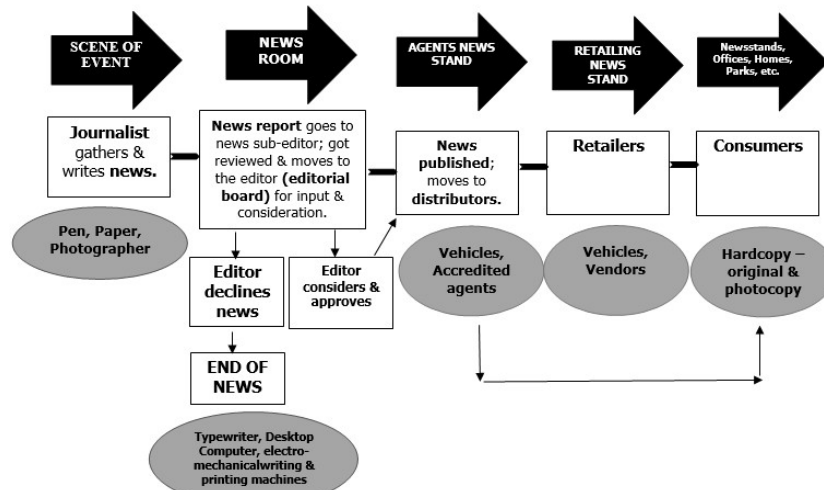
journalism – a new movement coming as a challenge to the monopolistic domination of the traditional mass media platforms by few rich individuals and corporations (Pp.348).

What comes out strongly from the above submissions and discussions is that the new media technologies present users with the opportunity to interconnect global communities and advance a dynamic workplace. It can also disrupt traditional industries, particularly when users have little or no control over how the new media technologies can be adapted to complement efforts of the traditional industry.

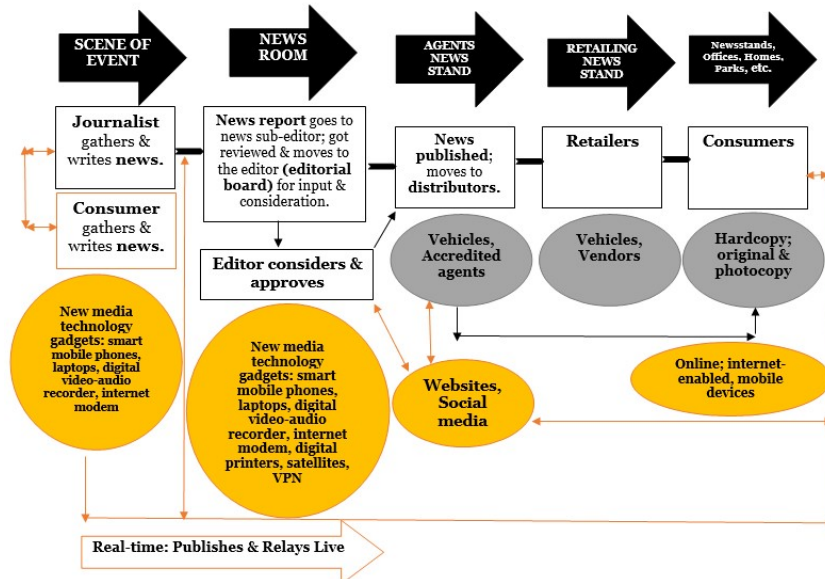
The next subsection illustrates and explains the old-new media divide in a typical newspaper industry - making a comparison between the old and new media in newspaper production, practice and management.

#### Section 2.5.1 The Old-New Media Divide in Newspaper Industry

This subsection develops and puts forward a two-flow chart (as shown below) to describe newspaper production and circulation processes in a typical traditional (old/pre-new media) and news eras. At a glance, these models (flow charts) illustrate the disruptions and changes that have occurred in the newspaper industry as a result of the presence of the new media technologies. This potentially presents new ways and has implication on the management activities in the industry.



**Figure 6:** The Traditional era (old/pre-new media) flow chart (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).



**Figure 7:** The New era (Digital) flow chart (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).

The above-mentioned chart demonstrates the differences in the publishing/disseminating processes in a newspaper house in the pre-new media and the new media eras.

The first chart shows that in the pre-new media era, a newspaper's product can be distributed only via the physical processes involving agents and retailers with the aid of mechanical mobility – vehicles. This is because the product is presented only in the physical form (hardcopy) as mechanical printing is the only feasible technology for such mass production. Similarly, even the initial process of newsgathering in the field itself is restricted to the use of mechanical tools such as pen and paper.

Conversely, in the second chart, the redefining impact of the new media technologies becomes visible. The newsgathering process combines both the mechanical approach involving pen and paper and the digital approach involving smartphones, laptops and Internet modems among others. The news processing activities in the newsroom similarly combine these two approaches such that the final product comes out in both physical (hardcopy) and digital (softcopy) forms; hence the dissemination process is both physical and electronic.

Thus, newspapers of today operate in a hybrid environment where they are obliged to deal with the traditional issues of hardcopy and then the emerging issues of the digital era. This entails fundamental changes in the ethos of newspaper management. Since the papers are now dealing with a more demanding audience in terms of timeliness of content, news must be broken as it breaks. This implies that newspapers are adopting the strategy of writing short and straightforward accounts, not only to overcome time constraints, but also to improve their chances of being accommodated in the increasingly jam-packed schedule of the typical

today's audience. In other words, it is both a strategy for dealing with the increased pressure and for the current phenomenon of scarcity of attention (Doyle, 2014; Razmerita, 2014; Purdy, Wong & Harris, 2016).

Similarly, the use of the automated writer, bots, has become a new strategy as conditioned by the emerging new environment of newspaper operation. Increasing competition for attention has compelled newspapers to employ this kind of artificial intelligence to help them break news as it develops while keeping their human resources budget manageable. Bots writing is a survival technique which since it helps to ensure deadlines are met. Otter (2017) elaborates:

This ability to monitor specific sets of data around the clock without needing a break is what makes bots so appealing to journalists. Unlike bots, journalists need time off and can't spend their day watching a single corner of the internet in the hope that something happens. Bots, on the other hand are excellent at doing exactly this (p.2).

The author noted that the earliest uses of a bot in journalism dates back to 2014 when a bot called Quakebot broke the story of a 4.4 magnitude earthquake that hit Los Angeles at 6:25am on a Monday in March 2014. By 6:33am the *Los Angeles Times* had published the story online under the by-line of Ken Schwencke, the developer of the quake-warning bot. As an algorithm, Quakebot monitors the US Geological Survey for reports of earthquakes over a 3.0 magnitude. When it finds one, the algorithm writes up a simple report, adds a map, puts the story into the content management system of the *LA Times*, and emails an editor to alert them to a story.

In the new media dispensation, content generation has become more diversified as newspapers can generate content from diverse sources including audience feedbacks. In other words, beyond the traditional means of content generation such as press statement, news conference and library research, media houses can now explore new media sources, which generally offer greater diversity, flexibility and efficiency (Mdlongwa, 2009; Williams, 2016). Media houses and journalists now utilize their emails and other social media platforms to receive content from their audiences, thus aiding investigative reporting to a significant extent (Mdlongwa, 2009). Today, new media technologies aid traditional media houses to access on-the-spot reports from eyewitnesses even in war zones, while obtaining facts concealed by the official establishment - as was demonstrated by *Wikileaks* (Kebbel, 2015). Hence, as observed by Egbochukwu (2013), exploring new media possibilities for investigative journalism is one strategy of enriching the hardcopy and keeping it relevant in the face of challenges.

Similarly, the mode of presentation of content also emerges as a change in journalistic culture emanating from new media realities. New media platforms offer a great deal of flexibility in content formats including text, images audio and video files. Such flexibility provides an opportunity for newspapers to deal with challenges from alternative content platforms (Culver, 2010; Duarte, 2009; Smith, 2009).

The foregoing indicates that management in the new media era necessarily becomes more dynamic as it operates in an environment of a hybrid of the old and

the new; the mechanical and the electronic. While it must satisfy the new culture of electronic consumption of news, the old culture of hardcopy consumption has not left the scene and so ought to be attended to as well. In other words, the entry of the new media technology into the scene – which has permeated the entire process of newspaper business, beginning from newsgathering to its distribution and then consumption to storage – has created the need for a managerial response that will deal with the new dynamics.

It is pertinent to state that the transformative effect of new media is not limited to newspapers, but to all hardcopy publishing industries including magazines and books. In the book publishing sector, the effects are fundamentally similar to what is seen in newspaper industry in terms of changes in marketing structure that impose new challenges and opportunities. E-publishing has clearly led to a decline in the volume of hardcopy books printed although but the rate of decline has reduced significantly in the last few years as the initial excitement over e-books seem to have waned (source?). However, whether softcopy document is displacing hardcopies is dependent on the genre. In adult fiction for instance, e-book appears to be making much inroads, while for religious books, hardcopies still hold sway (Belton & Wall, 2015). The book publishing industry is now responding to the opportunities and challenges posed by new reading platforms (Vaara, 2010).

According to Belton and Wall (2015),

Digital technology has certainly had a profound effect on the traditional book publishing and retailing industries... At one point, it looked as if the rise of e-books at knock-down prices and e-readers like Amazon's Kindle and Barnes & Noble's Nook posed an existential threat to book publishers



and sellers. “Literature found itself at war with the internet,” as Jim Hinks, digital editor of Comma Press, succinctly puts it. But contrary to expectations, the printed book is still surviving alongside its upstart e-book cousin, and technology is helping publishers and retailers reach new audiences and find new ways to tell stories (p.1).

However, unlike journalists, writers are basically not facing the risk of job loss because of the new publishing landscape. The hardcopy era entailed limited publishing opportunities given the imperative of production cost and distribution logistics. Authors who want their works widely distributed, nationally, regionally or globally, had to be on the mercy of the big publishing houses whose shelves are already over-stuffed with thousands of manuscripts, out of which only a few will make it to book stands. Evidence shows that writers who could not be published due to the limited opportunities and cost hindrance are now finding succour in the increasing number of online publishing platforms for both royalty and self-publishing. Nigerian Nobel Prize-winning author, Wole Soyinka, admitted the earlier fear of authors on the possible negative impact of digital media on their trade. However, he notes that this fear, for now, has proven to be unfounded and that his only concern as an author is to ensure that his royalties come to him as and when due in view of the new distribution mode that eliminates physical reckoning of sold copies as well as renders authors more vulnerable to copyright infringements (Soyinka, 2015).

The next subsection will be examining literature on the Nigerian newspaper industry and new media technologies. The subsection discusses the revolution in

the Nigerian telecommunication industry and the features of the development that have influenced operations and management of the newspaper industry.

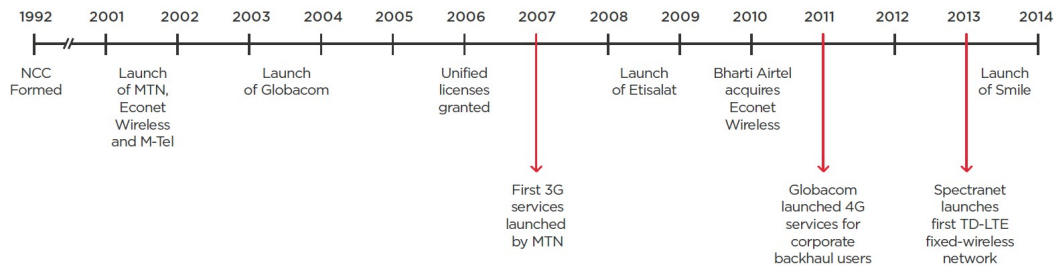
#### Section 2.5.2 The Nigerian Newspaper Industry and New Media Technologies

The new media's emergence in Nigeria is rooted in the revolution in the Nigerian telecommunication industry traced back to the enactment of Act 75 of 1992 that established the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). The NCC is a technical body that regulates telecommunications in the country; a responsibility hitherto shouldered by a government Ministry known as the Ministry of Information (Juwah, 2011; Ige, 2012; Emerah, Oyedele and David, 2013). The NCC Act has also enabled the body to fully deregulate the sector, allowing for active private sector participation. The impact of the deregulation of the sector was immediate and transforming. It led to a "phenomenal degree of telephone and Internet penetration" in the country (Juwah 2011, p.3). In 1996, NCC licensed the first 38 internet service providers (ISPs) in Nigeria. By January 1997, Linkserve Limited commenced operations became the very first internet service provider in the country. In 2000, the first set of private telephone operators was licensed, ultimately ending the activities of the government-controlled and monopolized Nigeria Telecommunications Limited (NITEL). By 2010, the number of licensed ISPs had grown to 100 (NBS, 2011). Juwah (2011) describes this era of liberalization as the "most eventful period" in the development of telecommunications in Nigeria.

Emerah, Oyedele and David (2013) recall how things evolved at that time:

The licensing of the three GSM operators in July 2001; Econet wireless communication Limited (now Airtel), MTN Limited and MTEL Limited brought a restored hope to the

yearnings and aspirations of Nigerians. The fourth GSM mobile operator, Globacom was licensed in September 2002. In the National Telecommunication policy of Nigeria Communication Commission (NCC), it was targeted that the sector (GSM) should attain 1.2 million subscribers within three years (Pp.1).

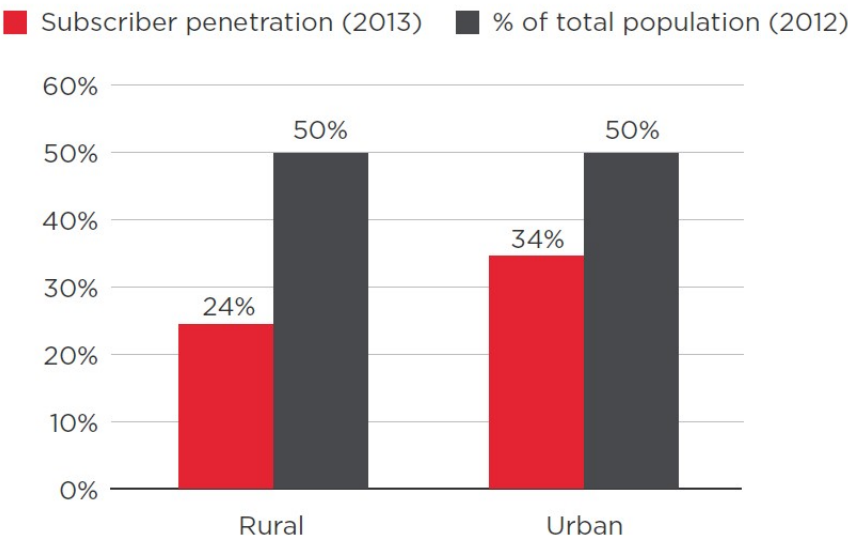


**Figure 8:** Mobile network operators launch timeline. Source: GSMA (2014, p.5).

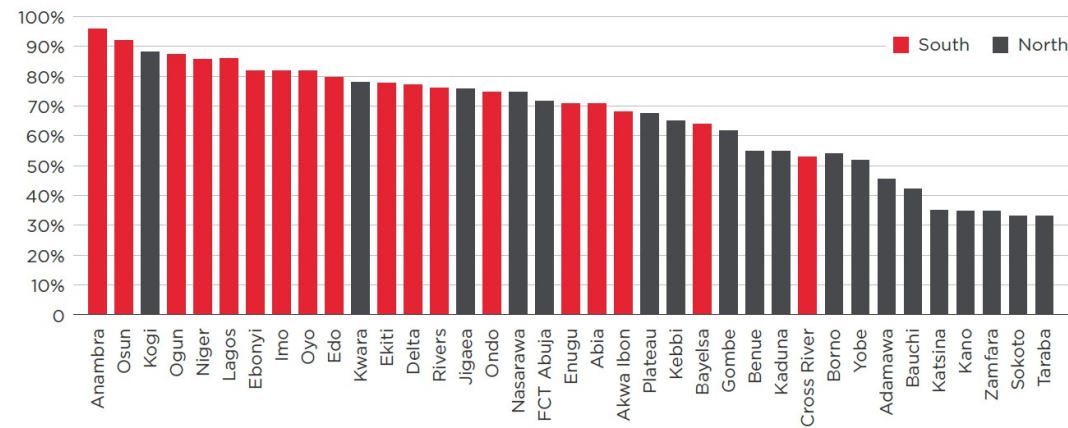
In terms of growth, “Nigeria is ranked the largest and fastest growing telecommunication market in Africa” (NBS, 2011 p.503). Nigeria is also among the “ten fastest telecommunication growth markets in the world, an indication of its robustness to return on investments” (Juwah 2011, p.3). Investment in the telecommunications industry soared above \$25 billion. Between 2011 and 2013, growth in the ICT sector stood at 30% “while its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 7.05 % in 2012 and 8.53% in 2013” (Osuagwu 2013, p.2).

Today, Internet penetration rate in the country is relatively high principally as a result of the growing investment in the telecommunications sector. According to the Nigeria Communications Commission, NCC (2018), as of January 2018, Nigeria has 146,865,145 mobile subscribers. However, studies show that mobile penetration and access are essentially concentrated in the cities when compared to rural areas? (GSMA Intelligence report, 2014). Noticeable is the sharp north-south

divide in penetration within the country, with southern regions (including major cities such as Lagos) better penetrated and serviced than the northern regions.



**Figure 9:** Gap in rural vs urban penetration. Source: Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (2011), GSMA Intelligence (2015).



**Figure 10:** Access to mobile phones — north-south divide. Source: Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (2011).

Against the background of a long history of media suppression and persecution, especially during the 30 years of military juntas, the arrival of the Internet opened up the public sphere to a greater diversity of voices and

discourses in Nigeria. Media organisations were also provided with a novel and quite efficient means of carrying on with their task. The Internet provides an efficient platform for seeking information and channelling of online messages to Nigerians. Through internet-enabled platforms, journalists and non-journalists - media trained and untrained - are able to source, access, produce and consume information.

The first casualty of this power of the Internet in Nigeria was Alhaji Salisu Buhari, a newly elected speaker of the House of Representatives who lost his position as the fourth-highest citizen of the country on allegations of certificate forgery and perjury. In 1999 and just a few months after the return to democracy, *The News* magazine, a leading Nigerian publication, through Internet technology investigated and discovered that the Speaker's claims of having attended Toronto University, Canada, as well as declarations on his business dealings and age were all lies. In its July edition, captioned "The Face of a Liar", the magazine showed that the Speaker had forged his age and university qualifications on his electoral nomination form. The Speaker, who had initially denied the story, eventually came out to admit his lies and resigned. Significantly, efforts by the Speaker's aides and some political associates to stop the circulation of the printed edition of the magazine to ensure that Nigerians did not read the truth were futile, as the entire content of the edition that contained the story was already published on the Internet and also shared with the AllAfrica.com website. Not only did the Nigerians read the story, the whole world became aware of it. This development further established the place of the Internet in the Nigerian mediascape.

As it stands today, the traditional newspaper industry in Nigeria appears to have fully embraced the new media. National dailies and other less prominent newspapers now publish online. Their online versions are updated round-the-clock and social media platforms and mobile technology enable these contents to be widely shared. Thus, what the newspapers cannot achieve with their hard copies in terms of news timeliness and speed, they make up for with their online versions. Even many of the newspapers that do not publish daily in hardcopy now leverage the Internet to ensure that they are read daily (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003; Biri, 2007; Abaji, 2009; Okorie, 2017).

Despite all the growth and prospects, the Internet in Nigeria remains challenged by a number of obstacles. Prominent amongst them are poor network functionality, the high cost of services and the inability of telecommunication service providers to cover the length and breadth of the country (Biri, 2007; Omo-Ettu & Sesan, 2007; GSMA Intelligence report, 2014; Nwanne, 2016). Factors like lack of electricity, vast distances, security concerns and road access have also continued to make expanding coverage to rural areas a complex issue as service providers consider the safety of their installations and cost and logistical implications of moving maintenance personnel to site from time to time (Ibekwe, 2010; Osunade, 2013; GSMA report, 2014; Pew Research Centre, 2015). All these imply that there are still gaps in leveraging the potentials of the new media.

## Chapter 3 Literature Review

The previous chapter examined Nigeria society, its media culture and technological activities as well as comparisons with some countries in Africa and Europe. In this chapter, we will be looking at this section examines some of the existing literature in that deals with media management.

### Section 3.1 Media Management

The concept of management involves the organization and coordination of human and material resources, as well as the driving of processes towards realizing a set goal (Frank, 2006; Deslandes, 2014). Other definitions of management include initiating, planning, administering, coordinating, projecting and executing actions geared towards achieving predetermined objectives, including human and materials resources (Anim, 2006; Deslandes, 2014; Akhator, 1997; Asemah, 2011), or, the 'holistic coordination of an enterprise' (Odoh, 2007, p.70). It also involves the effective mobilization (Mullins, 2007, p.11) and 'deployment of human and non-human efforts' in order to attain organizational goals (Nwanwene, 2005, p.3). The nature of the goal (routine operation, enhancement of productivity or crisis management etc) determines the management strategies required. In the context of newspaper management the goal is arguably maintaining strong market share through editorial and production circulation techniques.

As the field is quite fluid and complex, presently there does not exist any uniform definition of 'media management'. As observed by Albarran (2010), "the field of

media management in its present form is neither clearly defined nor cohesive” (p.2). However, based on the above general understanding of the concept of management, we may see media management as the process of organizing and coordinating human and material resources as well as driving processes aimed at realizing set objectives in media organizations. Thus, similar to other management spheres, media management would involve planning, coordinating, motivating, predicting, projecting and executing within the sphere of internal operations of a media organization towards the success of that organization. It involves mobilization of human and material resources towards the realization of given mass communication goals (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003; Aris & Bughin, 2009).

Aina (2002) refers to media management as an art of making and implementing policies, organizing and harnessing human and material resources towards the efficient operation and growth of a media establishment. Nevertheless, such definitions are omnibus and do not address the exact implications of these activities in a media setting. “Organising” and “harnessing” resources can apply to media houses as they can apply to any other establishment, and “human and material resources” can be anything depending on the endeavour being referred to. The definition offered by Owuamalam (2007) appears to address this imprecision by seeing media management as the task of coordinating and driving the administrative, editorial and financial processes of a media organization. He contends that media management is a complex whole encompassing “all those procedures, policies, decisions and actions that drive the operation of the media” (p.77). The author observes that media management involves administrative



judgment, business judgment, creative, technical judgment as well as legal and ethical judgment. This involves the responsibilities to make decisions, initiate ideas, plan, organize, staff, lead, direct and supervise the activities of a media organization to accomplish set goals. Thus, a media manager is involved with administrative matters, business matters, creative matters, technical and legal/ethical matters – all of which they are obliged to competently attend to in order to keep their organization afloat (Porter, 2004; Pringle & Starr, 2006; Küng, 2008). Thus, media management involves coordination of humans and materials in the spheres of content generation (editorial), revenue generation and administration.

Owuamalam (2007) observes that different mass media (newspaper, radio, TV etc.) demand certain management approaches peculiar to each given the variations in the manner of operations of these classes of the media. However, it must be noted that since the mass media (whether radio, TV or television) essentially occupies itself with content creation and dissemination as well as revenue generation via this, there must exist certain basic management principles general to all classes of mass media. This argument is further strengthened by the fact that among management theorists, it is agreed that all instances of management are underpinned by the same basic principles of coordinating, planning, motivating, executing, predicting and projecting (Sherman, 1995; Vogel, 2007; Albarran, 2010).

Therefore, attempting to create complete and inflexible demarcations between management processes as obtained in different classes of the media may only amount to taking an argument too far. However, while the above view may have

some validity in certain contexts, it may not in others. Thus, in the context of new media challenges, managing a newspaper house may not be exactly the same as managing a broadcast house, as newspapers apparently face a greater threat of displacement in this new era. It is essentially the print culture facing threat of displacement by an advanced form of electronic culture. Radio and television are part of the electronic culture, even if a non-digitalised form.

Nevertheless, as stated earlier, media management can be viewed as realised in three basic spheres of activity: editorial (content), administration and revenue. These components are discussed in the next subsections.

#### Section 3.1.1 Editorial (Content)

Editorial or content can be identified as “the soul of the media” (Owumalam, 2007). It is content, by way of news, editorial, entertainment and others, that constitutes the final product of media. Content represents what may be termed the by-product of the entire media operations in the same way that a textile company has cloth as its by-product and a brewery has a can or bottle of beer as its final product to be sold to the consumer. The media “sell” content to audiences.

Thus, in a newspaper house, editorial management will involve coordinating, planning and executing by optimising circulation platforms. Editorial management subsists mainly in what is technically known as gatekeeping. Traditionally, it involves selection and processing of materials to be disseminated. Adopting this view, Saravana (2011) describes gatekeeping as ‘nothing but to block unwanted or useless

things by using a gate, be it publication, broadcasting, the Internet, or some other type of communication' (p.2). However, along the line, scholars began to see gatekeeping more holistically as against the earlier view that restricted it merely to the role of including and excluding materials. Hence, gatekeeping became more broadly defined as 'the overall process through which social reality transmitted by the news media is constructed, and is not just a series of "in" and "out" decisions' (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley, 2001 cited in Saravanan, 2011, p.11). This idea of gatekeeping has been captured in theories like framing and media constructivism.

Gatekeeping is a central function in media operation. When a newspaper copy is delivered at the newsstands, the entire content represents the news judgment and creativity of the content (editorial) staff of that newspaper house i.e. the gatekeepers. The process that directly led to creation of this content is what content management entails. The workers involved in this area of newspaper management typically include the editors, reporters, proof-readers and page planners (Owuamalam, 2007). In most newspaper houses in Nigeria, one basically finds the following departments making up the content components: the newsroom, the library, the lithography room and the press. The editorial team include (in the order of hierarchy): Editor-In-Chief who typically doubles as the Managing Director (MD), Executive Director Publications (EDP), Title Editors (Daily, Saturday and Sunday editions), News Editor, Desk Heads, and Sub-Editors and ultimately to reporters. The Executive Director Publications (EDP) supervises the Title Editors who are directly in charge of the newsroom. The Managing

Director/Editor-in-Chief is the overall editorial head, a role he/she combines with general administrative supervision (Dueze, 2003; Uduak, 2010).

However, Gatekeeping in the old media does not mean the same thing in digital environments. A lot of shifts have occurred in the process and even in the very meaning of the phrase 'media product'. First, the role of reporters and some other gatekeepers has expanded beyond the above described traditional role. The convergence culture 'is characterized by reporters' full multi-skilling, coordinated management of the news flow and multimedia production, with a special emphasis in immediacy and versatility. Reporters cover any event for all platforms, and it is assumed that they will exercise skills in video editing, recording, voice-over narration and web publishing' (Avilés & Carvajal, 2008, p.12). Besides, the question of who is part of the gatekeeping process can no longer be answered the same way it was traditionally answered, as audience members are becoming integrated as actors as well. Robinson (2012) observes that the Internet has created room for sources and audiences to be part of news production. Social media users, both those who have subscribed to content of a media organisation and those who have not, participate in determining the extent content is disseminated. Content is diffused through technologically enhanced network wherein any active user can participate in the diffusion process by commenting, liking or sharing such content thus widening its visibility. Also, social media makes it possible for anyone to share a link to stories notwithstanding whether the newspaper itself has shared the link or not. New media technologies have also influenced intermedia agenda-setting wherein media outlets mutually rely on each other in the gatekeeping process

(Welbers, 2016). Reports posted by citizen journalists sometimes serve as a stepping stone for traditional journalists in building a story. Also, by monitoring what is trending online, journalists may get idea of what is newsworthy and should be reported on. In the same manner, traditional journalists set agenda for citizen journalists as the latter likes, comments on and shares reports by the former.

This audience participation in content creation and dissemination has tended to blur the creator-consumer line in media process, as content creators and consumers are now connected in a complex web of co-action (Bro & Wallberg, 2015). Thus, terms like 'gatewatchers' and 'monitors' are now being proposed as more appropriate for describing the role of reporters being that the power to originate news is no longer wholly in their hands. Similarly, emerging words like 'networked journalism' and 'communal media' point to how journalism is now being re-thought in light of new media technology. There is an emerging shift from sole gatekeeping to co-gatekeeping. Murschetz and Friedrichsen (2017) therefore observe that the novel trend is that media producers now co-create values with the audience. Newspaper managers, consequently, ought to pay attention to these novel dynamics of gatekeeping in order to function efficiently in the current era. They ought to realign their gatekeeping philosophy, create necessary structures and build relevant skills for coping with the new realities.

Furthermore, it is to be emphasised that the new media environment is bringing about a shift in what constitutes media product. Branding and packaging are now assuming a critical place in the content creation process. The new dynamics is such

that the competitiveness of any content hinges, to a significant extent, on the way it is branded and packaged. Thus, “content” in new media context has assumed a multidimensional nature that incorporates branding and packaging. Furthermore, many media outfits are merely involved in content distribution without having to create the content themselves; they are mere syndicates as against content producers. Though content syndication has always been with us (as seen with news agencies and TV networks, for instance), new media has greatly expanded the frontiers of this practice both in terms of number of players and dynamism of the process. The implication is that with new media, content management is shifting from what it used to be (analogue) to digital; new dimensions are being added to it. Consequently, content or editorial management needs to understand the shifting landscape in order to be relevant.

### Section 3.1.2 Administration

Administration is another component in the management process of a media house. It is a wide and complex realm involving day-to-day planning, coordination and execution. The aim of administration is to ensure that all the human and material resources as well as the company’s operational processes are systematically coordinated towards optimizing efficiency. The administration is thus in charge of staff recruitment, staff training, staff promotion, staff discipline, procurement of materials, maintenance of facilities and equipment, accounting, auditing etc. (Soola, 1998; Pringle & Starr, 2006). It is, however, important here to differentiate “administration” in the narrow sense of a single department that coordinates staff and operational matters in an organization from “administration”

as a larger component in the operation of a media house and whose scope encompasses the governing processes (but not the technical processes) within the various departments like editorial, engineering, legal, security, accounting and auditing among others. For instance, administration, in the context of the editorial department, would refer to all non-editorial (i.e. non-creative) processes going on in the newsroom, i.e. it excludes the actual creative and artistic moment of content production but includes organization and resource allocation done by the head of the newsroom, all of which serve as a support to the actual editorial acts.

In a typical Nigerian newspaper establishment, one is likely to find an administration department, which is in charge of operational matters including staff-related matters. However, in some, there is a separate “human resources department” that is in charge of staff-related matters, while yet in others, such a department is called the “administration/human resources department” to reflect its dual function. However, as just stated above, “administration” as a larger component in the management process of such an establishment will involve the coordinating and planning activities done within every department of the firm – editorial, marketing, legal, engineering, finance (accounting/auditing) and others. However, in some newspaper organizations, departments like engineering and security are sub-departments under the administration (Dueze, 2003; Uduak, 2010).

Importantly, nevertheless, all departments in a newspaper house, whether a separate full department or a sub-department under the administration, still rely on the administration department in their day-to-day operation as each one requires

administrative support in its functioning. Thus, “administration” considered in the narrow sense of a single department of a newspaper house still has a large and all-encompassing scope of operation. In some Nigerian newspapers, the Executive Director Operations (EDP) is the highest-ranking officer as far as administration is concerned. He/she supervises administration matters; the head of admin and all other departmental heads including editors, head of finance, head of engineering and others report to him/her in matters of administration as they concern their respective departments.

Administration in newspaper organisations today generally benefits from new media. Use of online technology for storing of staff databases, processing of salaries and communicating with staff basically eases the administrative process. For instance, newspapers often have to communicate with their workers at different outstations; email basically makes this process faster and seamless as well eliminate the extra cost of mailing memos physically. Online technology is also useful for more widely disseminating as well as the quicker processing of job applications when a newspaper wants to recruit. A newspaper like *Punch* uses the Internet to conduct written and oral interviews for potential employees, thus making the process, faster, cheaper and convenient for both the organisation and the applicants. Thus, with new media, many aspects of administration are made more efficient and a newspaper becomes more capable of handling emergencies. All this underlines the imperative of adopting new media tools by newspapers managers of today, as this has evidently become a vital component of industry competitiveness.



Generally, quick processing of businesses is becoming a very critical value in corporate world today; it could determine an organisation's success or failure.

### Section 3.1.3 Revenue

The revenue component of media management involves the activities concerned with driving income for a media house. This typically involves advertisement canvassing and circulation (Dueze, 2003; Albarran, 2010; Uduak, 2010). This aspect of media management is absolutely crucial to the survival of a media establishment, since its objective is to ensure that the organization remains financially viable; finance being critical to any media establishment (Soola, 1998; Owuamalam, 2007; Everett, 2011).

In newspaper houses in Nigeria, the revenue component of the management is typically part of the marketing department. This department comprises advertising and circulation headed respectively by an advert manager and circulation manager. In some cases, the marketing department is concerned with adverts alone, while circulation stands as a separate department. The highest-ranking officer is usually the Executive Director (marketing) who reports to the Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief (MD/E-in-C) (Dueze, 2003; Uduak, 2010).

New media technology has also permeated how businesses are conducted in the revenue domain of newspapers. As earlier shown in this thesis (section 2.5), the Internet has altered circulation and advertising landscape, thus redefining competition among newspapers. The work of circulation has now extended beyond

the circulation department which now focuses on hardcopy sales while the task of online circulation is carried out across other departments; chiefly ICT and editorial departments. In fact, newspapers now integrate all their workers in the online distribution of content by encouraging them to share and comment on their reports through their individual social media accounts. Many newspapers have also linked their individual workers' social media accounts to their online circulation system, such that whenever content is posted on their website, the alert and link automatically pops up on every worker's account, enabling the newspaper to leverage these workers' network of friends and followers. As seen earlier in the discussion of gatekeeping, the same is achieved with subscribers and even non-subscribers to content of a newspaper.

New media also create a new channel for newspapers to canvass for adverts. Notices inviting potential advertisers to bring their businesses to a newspaper are now disseminated online. Individual advert workers now employ the Internet to connect with potential clients, thus expanding their reach and sometimes dispensing with need for physical movements. Thus, advert canvassing has moved from being mainly a physical and face to face process to virtual engagement online. Receiving and processing commercial materials for publication from distant clients is now greatly eased by online technology, thus saving time and cost, and rendering more seamless services. In a nutshell, new media has introduced new standards which newspaper revenue managers must key into to maintain and even strengthen their competitiveness.

However, a closer and more critical look at the concept and process of media management will show that the various components are so intricately connected that strictly speaking it is impossible to absolutely demarcate them from each other. For instance, while the editorial component may pride itself as the nucleus of a media establishment, its activities cannot go on independent of the administration and revenue components. The newsroom, the library and other departments that make up the editorial component require administrative coordination and planning within and among themselves. The daily editor (DE) has to administer the newsroom, plan activities, coordinate the personnel and allocate funds for activities. The same is true for the librarian. Similarly, the two departments also require the support of the administration department in their day-to-day functioning. In the same vein, both the editorial and administration components interlock with the revenue component as their activities crucially affect the revenue drive of the organization. For instance, the editorial component has to deliver marketable content in order to attract audience patronage and so ease the work of the circulation and advert staff. The revenue component has to deliver sufficient revenue to facilitate content generation drive of the editorial component by way of research, travels, phone calls and other activities of news gathering.

There exists a mutual interdependence among them and this arguably justifies why one sees mutually connected and continuously overlapping duties. Hence, a DE is at the same time a revenue generator and an administrator, while a revenue generator is surely an administrator and may at times become content generator where, for instance, an advert canvasser negotiates a commercialized feature or

news with a company and transmits to the editorial personnel for implementation. In Nigeria, this overlap of duties is seen formalized in many newspaper houses with the creation of a position known as Managing Editor/DE (special projects). This officer, though essentially an editorial personnel who has risen from the ranks of reporters, has the responsibility of initiating and negotiating “special projects” – a term referring to completely slanted and commercialized reports focusing on government or organizations who have paid an agreed amount. This is often a big money earner and generally more lucrative than conventional advertisements (Soola, 1998; Dueze, 2003).

This scenario may result in a clash of values within the management of the organization. The journalists who generate content are bound by their professional ethics that decrees strict social responsibility. The ethos of their profession is such that it privileges truth, accuracy and public trust over money. However, the revenue personnel (usually trained marketers and business experts) have their own professional ethos revolving around business success. Therefore, having these two classes of professionals working in the same organization and towards the same objectives may create paradoxes. For instance, former MD/E-in-C of *The Sun*, one of the leading national dailies in Nigeria, once noted how he had disputes on several occasions between one of his editors and the head of marketing as the two parties became locked in arguments over the suitability of a content (Awoyinfa, 2009).

Media managers are often caught in a complex web of motives, goals and ethos that may at times conflict with each other, posing both internal and external difficulties for them and their organization. Thus, a media manager has a lot of (at

times conflicting) interests to attend to in the course of his/her work. These interests include public trust, financial interest of the organization, personal career goals, audience's taste, legal and ethical standards, as well as interests of other groups and sectors affected by media activities. Each of these interests is critical to the corporate success of a media organisation.

The question of how a media manager will wade through these complexities thus becomes crucial in any discussion of the issue of media management. Radical critics of mass media tend to affirm that media is now chiefly motivated by financial interests due to its current capitalist circumstances. The implication is that media establishments have simply chosen to privilege revenue earnings over other legitimate interests confronting media management, thus literally abdicating their duties as custodians of public values.

Much criticism of media has been lobbied by Marxist scholars as seen in works of Habermas (1962), Adorno (1999) and Horkheimer & Adonor (2002). Other critics include Bagdikian (1983), Gilens and Hertzman (2000) and Petley (2004). These latter scholars have demonstrated how capitalist interests have dictated the direction of ownership, management structure and content of the modern mass media industry. The Frankfurt School, however, has paid particular attention to the entertainment media, where they observe that art is no longer governed by its internal logic but by economic motive, a situation that has adversely affected the quality of entertainment products. This fate of entertainment content has arguably also come on new content. In Nigeria, for instance, commercialization of news has

become a regular practice, as media organisations turn the ethos of news on its head by subjecting news selection to the commercial rule of “pay-as-you-go” just as obtainable with advertising (Omenugha & Oji, 2011). This trend has become common with many media houses the world over. The role of new media on all this is not difficult to see. Many traditional news media now struggle to hold their own in the market due to increased competition brought about by new media, as audience and advertisers are presented with ever increasing spectrum of alternatives. Omenugha and Oji (2011), in their findings, reported that some media organisations blamed dwindling revenue for the growing news commercialisation practices. In this sense, media managers of today are confronted with new challenges as they work to achieve an acceptable balance their business interest and public accountability as per their content.

However, while the critics cited above have made an important contribution by way of pointing out the deep-cutting influence of the capitalist culture on the modern mass media, its reduction of the driving motive of the media to justify revenue earning may be questioned. While media houses surely pursue revenue, they cannot be said to be entirely at liberty to do this howsoever they want, given that their overall survival and sustainability are still dependent on their public acceptability and other compelling forces outside revenue. Thus, one may say that the forces of public scrutiny and public conscience as well as legal mechanisms serve as a check on media managers – a situation which, to an extent, ensures that they do not entirely become strangers to society’s norms. New media plays an important role here, as audiences are now empowered to continuously scrutinise

and give instant public verdicts on media reports via likes, comments and even the decision to share or not. Right of reply is now so much less restricted by gatekeeping privileges of traditional media, as audience members can leverage online space to air their views. Hence, new media enhances public accountability imperative among traditional practitioners.

Nevertheless, media management remains a complex and somewhat internally contradicting scenario given its dynamics that potentially produces internal and external paradoxes. The problematic nature of this scenario is personalized by the office of the Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief who as the title suggests stands on a meeting ground between two interests (business and journalism) that are at times conflicting in their intent and values.

### Section 3.2 Key Media Managers in a Typical Nigerian Newspaper Organization

The table below describes the key media managers in a typical Nigerian newspaper organization and their roles towards the production of newspaper and media management.

Title	Role Description in the Nigerian Context
Publisher/Founder	The proprietor of the newspaper. Usually a sole proprietor unlike in the west where in many instances there is joint ownership by equity holders. Role is restricted to a particular newspaper establishment as against the case in the west where a proprietor may control a media conglomerate. Many newspaper proprietors

	in Nigeria are politicians.
Managing Director/ Editor-in-Chief; MD/E-in-C	The highest authority in the day-to-day running of the newspaper. In many instances, publishers in Nigeria have appointed their MD/E-in-C from among family members or close aides (for politician proprietors). Some of them rise from the ranks while others do not.
Title Editors, TE (Daily, Saturday, Sunday)	TEs are in charge of their respective titles. In Nigerian newspapers, the Editor Daily is usually considered the number one among others TEs as the daily title is seen as the flagship.
Executive Director Publishing, EDP	EDP is usually appointed from among the title editors. In Nigerian newspapers, he/she is very influential as Title Editors are under his/her direct supervision. He/she can overrule the decisions of the TEs. He/she is subject to only the Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief.
Executive Director Marketing, EDM/ Marketing Manager; MM	Oversees the revenue drive of the newspaper organization. In Nigeria, EDM/MM may equally help in developing editorial content when this has direct commercial relevance.
Human Resources Manager/ Admin Head; HRM/AH	Coordinate the recruitment and/or dismissal of staff of the newspaper organization; including the news crews. Roles also include generating and managing staff information database. The HRM/AH works and reports to the Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief.
Sub-Editor; SEd	The SEd in Nigerian newspaper organisations may or may not be a permanent position. In some instances, this role is rotated among some senior reporters who work one week each and hand



	over the baton. They are usually very influential in determining what goes into the paper or not. The SEd reports to the TE or the News Editor depending on the newsroom arrangement.
News reporter/Journalist	Focuses on news gathering primarily. In Nigerian newspapers, many reporters – particularly experienced ones – also handle desk tasks in the newsroom as SEds, feature editors, political editors etc., all this as a matter of cost-saving. Reporters are many a time also engaged in revenue drive particularly in the light of the revenue difficulties confronting the industry in recent years.

**Table 1:** Key media managers in a typical Nigerian newspaper organization (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).

### Section 3.3 Media Management Practice and New Media Technologies

New media technologies are critical *digital assets* (Anyanwu, Green & Sykes, 2012) that form part of non-human resources (Adamu, 2007; Salman, Ibrahim, Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011) which are coordinated by management to achieve set objectives. Some of these digital assets make huge impact when properly harnessed and managed. They therefore require training and skills to handle (John, 2009; Ekhareafor, Asemah & Edegoh, 2013, Okorie, 2017). These technologies are interconnected systems with capacity to automatically manipulate, acquire, transmit, store and manage information that will assist managers to achieve desired results (Tiamiyu, 2001; Croteau & Hoynes, 2003). Quinn (2005) argues that ‘technology is a powerful driver’ which provides options for media managers in their quest to improve journalism (p.12).

The management of new media technologies has been recognized as one of the critical areas of media research (Mierzejewska, 2010). Previous studies on the management of technology and innovation in media organizations such as Mierzejewska & Hollifield, (2006) and Küng, (2007) had also pointed to this direction. They argue that managers need to understand the development, economics, and social influences of new media technologies on media industries and their products. Küng (2007) notes that the capacity and speed of technological changes present challenges to different aspects of the media production processes, and require managerial understanding and pragmatic intervention to achieve organizational goals.

New media technologies create new tasks for media managers to manage, including developing skills to deal with interactive media practices. Pavlik (2001) notes that in a contemporary newsroom, a media manager who is multi-skilled is empowered to independently manage, package and produce news. For instance, a journalist would be able to deal with shot types, choice of news, logical presentation, packaging and dissemination of news. These abilities create opportunities for the journalist to effectively coordinate and manage news production - including creating, editing and online hosting of news content. Therefore, as media establishments and practitioners are necessitated to retool their newsrooms and acquire new skills, knowledge management of new media technologies becomes critical to media management.

The concept of knowledge management in a news organization denotes processes of knowledge generation, coordination and codification within and outside the media organization, particularly as routine tasks of media managers involve dealing with varied information and knowledge. These require techniques to manage, so as to generate innovation for media production and management practice. It involves creating knowledge, sharing and supporting media workers to learn and then innovate; particularly in using new media technologies in their production output (Awad and Ghaziri, 2007). Bielawski and Metcalf (2003) contend that new media technologies knowledge management provide and support creativity in media production processes. In addition, the management of information systems provides media managers with the flexibility to coordinate and manage their news project. Hence, the transfer, sharing and management of new media technologies knowledge are strategic to media management. This is because such knowledge has become a critical component of efficient media practice.

The above implies that the management responsibility is not restricted to people with a 'manager' tag in their job title. Rather, all levels of workers are involved with management in one way or the other. All individuals within an organisation contribute their initiative and decision making towards realising common organisational goals. Hence, Odoh (2007, p.69) has contended that in management, what is of practical importance is the task which one performs, and not the title. He thus opines that the clerks, supervisors and section leaders all conduct managerial responsibilities, however of a different type and significance.

The above also noted new media-imposed decentralisation of managerial control in media has significant implications for media management. First is that it tends to adjust the role of top management staff by taking away some of their decision-making responsibilities and replacing them with supervisory responsibilities. In other words, rather than be the decision makers in all circumstances, they now have to merely supervise subordinates who now make some of the decisions. This calls for a new strategy of harnessing human resources wherein emphasis necessarily shifts from merely controlling subordinates to equipping, motivating and guiding them to take control. In this case, effort is directed towards providing necessary skills and job environment for journalists to embrace the new challenge which calls for multi-tasking and assumption of deeper technical, editorial and ethical responsibility. Secondly, the new environment of devolved responsibilities affords top managers the benefit of refocusing their attention from the day-to-day operational issues to overarching strategic issues of future growth.

A number of empirical studies have been conducted to interrogate how new media practices have actually impacted on newspaper practices in Africa and Nigeria in particular. A study by Hayes (2010) on 'New Technologies and Print Journalism Practice in Zimbabwe: An ethnographic study' discusses how Zimbabwean print journalists in a state-controlled and private press deploy new ICTs (the Internet; email; and mobile phone) in their routine practices. The researcher examines the conditions of practice and social factors that define new technologies usage as well as the impact on traditional journalistic standards and practices. The study contends that discourses into the impact of new technologies on journalistic practice in Africa

must critically consider the contextual factors that combine to structure and restrain the new technologies usage. It demonstrates that despite the wide range of resources and technological possibilities to work that the new technologies offer to journalists, they also present ethical and professional challenges. Hence, the findings reject technology deterministic approaches that claim straightforward fundamental connection between technology and society.

Ekharefor, Asemah and Edegoh (2013) have undertaken a study to examine the challenges of Nigerian newspaper management in the era of new media technologies. The researchers explored the impact of Information Communication Technologies on the newspaper management, including on their operating cost and revenue profile. Within the context of the capacity of circulation, readership strength and length of operation, the study purposively selected and examined five Nigerian newspapers; namely, *The Vanguard*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *The Compass* and *National Mirror*. Among others, the study indicates that a critical issue in newspaper management is the dual functions of editorial and technical decisions. The technical decisions deal with the acquisition, adaption and maintenance of the new media technologies in the news production. This effort is geared towards improving the quality of news print run and management processes. However, the operating cost has continued to constrain the management in optimal deployment of the technologies. Moreover, the costs of maintaining the internet and network infrastructure that support the new media technologies are huge and runs into millions of dollars. Thus, this challenges media management practice.

In a study that looks into how the new media technologies impact Nigerian Media Relations practices, Ikpe and Olise (2010) note that the new media technologies like the internet, mobile phones, videoconferencing among others have distorted how other media of communication are managed in terms of editorial decisions, news gathering, production, circulation and general administration. However, they contend that the activities of these new technologies overlap with other media of communication due to technological innovations and the convergence capacity they have. The study identify among others, factors like cyber crisis, low level of technology penetration, poor funding among others posing as challenges to effective deployment of new media technologies in Nigerian media relations (management) practice.

Adegbilero-Iwari and Ikenwe (2014) study focuses on the adoption and use of social (new) media in Nigeria prints and electronic media. The study indicates that the organizations (including the newspaper houses) are dynamically engaging the new media. Globalization and the new media technologies are found to have created online communities of people who are available in real time to interact, broadcast news, inspire discussion and react to issues. Most newspapers in Nigeria like *The Sun*, *The Daily Times*, *The Vanguard*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Trust* have adopted the media technologies and ultimately launched their media houses online, including on social media platforms like Twitter and FaceBook. The study further shows that these newspaper organizations are adapting the new media technologies in a complementing manner to conduct their traditional media management practice,

including news gathering, processing, production, dissemination, evaluation and storage.

Agboola (2014) in his study, focuses on the influence of new media on conventional media in Nigeria and offers an explanation that even though the effect of globalization and new media technologies are experienced in the circulation of print newspapers, particularly in the USA, the case is different in Nigeria. The study notes that in Nigeria, print newspapers still attract advertising dollars despite the presence and activities of online newspapers. Both the print and online newspapers are said to be complementing each other. The researcher argues that the internet will not replace the traditional newspapers just as television did not replace newspapers and radio. However, the study recognizes that new technologies have influenced newspapers' layout but arguably not the content, as online newspapers still have their content in form of the traditional news. It further recognizes that because a large proportion of the Nigerian populace owns an internet connection, the younger generation prefer to read online newspapers because they provide convenient platforms for immediate submission of feedback on interesting news stories. This factor has subtly squeezed advertisement revenue of the newspaper media houses and ultimately how media management practice is conducted.

From the foregoing, five issues have come to prominence. They are:

1. New media technologies are employed in the production and management processes of media (newspaper) organisations.

2. Newspaper newsroom has evolved from its previous analogue to digital form as traditional newspapers seek to leverage new media technology towards enhancing their competitiveness in the current era.
3. Other factors such as economy, demography (like literacy level, age), political culture and media ownership combine to impact media operation and management practice. These also bring changes.
4. Globalization and new media technologies bring changes to the roles of media managers, as new skills are needed in the digital newsroom. Moreover, the multi-skill roles combine and overlap.
5. Globalization and new media technologies provide new knowledge to media management for effective performance.

A noticeable gap in the literature reviewed is the absence of the managers' and audience perspectives. This study intends to add to the literature on new media technologies and media management in Nigeria by providing these perspectives. The next section engages literature on newspaper management in the new media era and interrogates areas of technological challenges.

### Section 3.4 Newspaper Management in New Media Era

The advent of new media obviously has some consequences for media management. Mdlongwa (2009) supports this assertion:

Media management all over the world faces new challenges every day. For the last few years in particular, one media disaster news headline has followed another. Newspaper circulations have dropped sharply and, in



some instances, collapsed altogether; newspaper readers have suddenly deserted in droves and migrated online and advertisers have taken their money elsewhere as the media industry faces a moment of truth. The more difficult the situation today's media has faced, the more important it has become for the industry to have a proper analysis on what's going on so that adequate solutions for survival can be found (pp.1).

The above summarises the dilemma of media management in general and print media management in particular in the face of the "intrusion" by the Internet and New Media Technologies. This scenario stems from the new media's capacity to offer information and entertainment in a way that could be preferable to what the traditional media offers in terms of cost, convenience, interactivity and user control (Gwajinka, 2003; Ezeibe & Nwagwu, 2009; Reich, 2013; Agboola, 2014).

With the arrival of new media, much is changing and the effect on management of the traditional newspaper has become very visible and at times even disturbing. Some media owners, key media policymakers and publishers such as Sir David Bell have criticised the search engine giants and emphatically accused Google and Yahoo of "stealing" content from newspapers (Baran, 2004; Biri, 2007; Kirchhoff, 2009; Pew Research Centre, 2015). A similar assertion also came from media magnate Rupert Murdoch in early April 2009. He had queried, "Should we be allowing Google to steal all our copyrights?" (Mahmud, 2009). Moreover, Sam Zell, owner of the Tribune Company and publisher of the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and the Baltimore Sun claimed it was the newspapers in America who empowered Google to steal their content for nothing, but asked without the content what would Google do, and how profitable would Google be? (Mahmud, 2009). With this

debate on, and blame-game ongoing, major giants and media tycoons in the newspaper business believe that 19-year old Google is now so dominant that it is forcing the newspaper industry out of business.

However, Google sees these claims and accusations as unsubstantiated ill-founded. The search engine giant's defence is that it is the Internet which has posed the threat to the traditional model of newspaper business. Google has asserted that, rather than harming the industry, it is actually helping to increase traffic to newspapers' websites. Google News is said to be showing only the headlines, a line or two of text and links to the story's Web site, which according to Google, is fair in copyright laws. In any case, threats arising from technology are evident in the newspaper industry.

Other players in the media industry have pointed out that there are indications of a shift in the way people get their news. According to the latest data from the Audit Bureau of Circulations, the average daily circulation of USA newspapers declined by 7% in the last and first quarters of 2008 and 2009 respectively. The data indicate that in recent times, people have got their news and information online because of a shift in the consumer behaviour (Biri, 2007; Ali *et al.*, 2011; Pew Research Centre, 2015; Omenugha, 2015).

Containing the effects of new media technologies on traditional media is arguably a management function. Hence, Quinn (2005) asserts that the new digital age of media practice requires new approaches in the management of human and non-

human resources. For instance, the key responsibilities of a news editor in the present new media practice regime are dealing with the digital equipment (new media technologies) and managing the newsroom so that various news stories coming in could properly be harnessed and launched online.

Generally, newspaper industries across the world have tried to come to terms with the reality of new media technologies. Key strategies that have been deployed in this regard include integration of new media platforms in the operation of traditional media, pursuit of new skills required by the innovations, adjustment in content, technical and aesthetic philosophies, and integration of new media-compliant revenue driving strategies among other measures (Sassen, 2002; McQuail, 2010; Egbochukwu, 2013; Reich, 2013). These, in the words of Egbochukwu (2013), are what the traditional media ought to do or “get definitely perished in the thoroughly disruptive waves being provoked by the new media platforms” (p.12).

Scholars like Kirchhoff (2009) and Barthelemy *et al.* (2011) argue that even though there are significant shifts triggered by new media technologies on traditional print media industry, particularly around attempts to monetize online content and find other sources of revenue, the decline of the industry is exaggerated. They contend that news organizations are merely transforming and adapting. Their studies show that the assertion that newspapers are in continuous decline is mostly Western-driven, and does not reflect Southern variations, including the fact that in many

emerging economies such as Brazil and South Africa, print newspaper sales are robust and growing (PwC, 2016).

In Nigeria, although there has been a considerable drop in readership and a consequent drop in the circulation of newspapers over the years, there are still some national newspapers like *The Sun*, which have grown dramatically. For instance, in 2011, *The Sun* newspaper was adjudged to have a daily print run of 130,000 copies and 135,000 for weekend titles. It also uses the free paper concept for both print and online versions, while growing their advertising dollars as well. With an average of 80% sales, *The Sun* is adjudged the highest selling newspaper in Nigeria. The fact that the drop-in newspaper readership started even before the new media era in Nigeria would suggest that this technology might not be solely blamed for whatever woes of the industry.

There are some successful stories of mainstream (traditional) newspapers which have been able to weather the tempest and remain resilient through their online digital newspapers. These recorded prosperous developments of the newspaper establishments tend to suggest that in a real sense, the new media have some overwhelming and compelling positive impacts on the traditional print media.

In the United States of American, some of these successful newspaper establishments include *The New York Times*, *Knight Ridder*, and *the Washington Post*. According to a study by Gilbert & Karahalios, (2009), *The New York Times* has actually been a leader in consumer demographic marketing. It has 16 million

registered users and with its online platform, [www.mytimes.com](http://www.mytimes.com), users are empowered to customize an advertising message with specific demographic cuts. They collect only five categories of consumer demographic data: age, sex, income, geography and e-mail; this has enabled them to garner 70% premiums for their demographically targeted advertising (Gilbert & Karahalios, 2009). Key mass media players and observers argue that the core traditional newspaper business are successful because they had adapted and integrated the online platform in their operations and all have been successful in establishing new markets with new sources of revenue (Gilbert, 2002; Biri, 2007; Kirchhoff, 2009; Fill, 2011; Reich, 2013). In addition to that, a greater number of citizens in the USA have their own internet connection and so, they can access and read newspapers online. The 2016 Internet World Stats record that the USA has the second largest Internet user population in the world with 704.8 million users trailing only behind China. In terms of the percentage of population or penetration of internet users, the USA has 69.8%.

New media technologies also bring with them a set of opportunities and challenges for journalism professionals with their implications for newspaper management (Garrison, 1996; Biri, 2007; Eze, 2017). With the computerization of news production, the activities of the journalists in the newsrooms became evolved. Prior to the adoption of new technologies, journalists were accustomed to traditional means of news production. These include face-to-face interviews, gathering, submitting and editing of news stories on paper before getting it typeset and

published. This traditional means bring about delays in publication of breaking news (Dominick, 2009; Salman, Ibrahim, Hj.Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011).

But presently, the use of smart mobile phones, personal computers and desktop publishing software for news gathering, processing and publishing, is common practice (Montoya, Massey, Hung & Crisp, 2009; Reich, 2013; Briel, 2018). Journalists and media practitioners, can access, assess and gather news via the Internet. There is flexibility and a smarter way with which journalists can conduct their work. They can do their fact checking or inquiries into data or background information directly from their homes or offices. This has improved the speed and efficiency of news production.

The increasing access to internet and penetration of mobile services have advanced each of the activities of news production, news generating, processing and reporting. For instance, the presence of mobile smartphones provides the cheapest, easiest, most convenient and prompt response to leads, gathering and dissemination of information on minute-by-minute basis either through internet browsing, the bulk short message service (SMS), text messages and calls. The email platform assists to accelerate transmission of contents, music, pictures and motions to the newsroom. While the internet is making it convenient for journalists to undertake researches and investigations on news stories, VPN (Virtual Protocol Network) enables newspapers establishments to access and reproduce at various sites around the world. The technologies provide the support for real time content update and meeting of publication deadlines.

Capacities of the new media technologies such as those aforementioned, point to the fact that the arrival of virtual publishing has fundamental challenges on journalists and newsroom practices. Studies show that media establishments and practitioners are necessitated to retool their newsrooms and acquire new skills in order to maximize outcomes from new media technologies in newsroom practice (Soola, 1998; Yap, 2009; Salman, Ibrahim, Hj.Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011; Miles, 2012). Practitioners, including journalists in the field, editors/DE in the office and administrative managers are expected to develop their technology skills to align with their new roles, improve quality of service delivery, and guarantee business continuity?

However, new media technologies are still contending with privacy issues, content credibility, reliability and other quality control concerns. According to some views, these factors may pose some challenges for online news in the future (Gilbert & Karahalios, 2009; Fill, 2011; Miles, 2012). However, it is also believed that these credibility issues associated with the Internet will not affect mainstream (traditional) media establishments who have built credibility over time, as their brand integrity would not just disappear simply because they have integrated online technologies into their operation (John, 2009; McQuail, 2010; Mile, 2010; Reich, 2013).

In summary, the foregoing shows that the new media technology era represents some fundamental challenges for managers of the traditional newspapers.

However, these challenges can still represent huge opportunities depending on how they view them and whether there is a resilient, appropriate and efficient managerial response to the issues. This study intends to make this inquiry in relation to Nigeria. The next section will build the theoretical framework to guide such inquiry.

### Section 3.6 Theoretical Framework

This section focuses on three theories considered important in the discourse of media management vis-à-vis new media technology. These theories are:

1. Technological Determinism (TD) Theory
2. Disruptive Technology (DT) Theory, and
3. Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory

The strengths and weaknesses of these theories in explaining the implication of new media technologies to newspaper management are discussed. At the end, the researcher, based on the theories, puts forward his own model to further guide the analysis in this thesis.

#### Section 3.6.1 Technological Determinism (TD) Theory

Technological determinism (TD) is “a reductionist theory that presumes that a society’s technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values.... an approach that identifies technology, or technological advances, as the central elements in processes of social change” (Croteau & Oynes, 2003, p.13). Here, ‘technology’ consists of such things as codes and structures for interpersonal



behaviours and social institutions, as well as modern computer and Internet technologies. Thus, Chandler (2000) considers it as encompassing the whole of our material culture.

From a sociological perspective, the theory asserts that humans are conditioned by technological advancements as they actualize their existence and that their decisions and actions are inevitably shaped by the nature and the extent of technological structures existing in society at any point in time (Leonard, 2008). Therefore, a prominent technological determinist, Neil Postman, in an interview had urged caution in the adoption and deployment of new technologies in the society (Postman, 1995). He noted that although the user may be gaining something (in form of new ability or convenience), he or she is inevitably giving something up too (often in the form of healthy relationships or cognitive abilities). He thereafter put forward the following questions to ask when adopting any new technology:

1. What is the benefit of the technology?
2. Who does it benefit?
3. What are we giving up in order to gain this new benefit?

The above call for caution stems from the belief of technological determinists that we do not, in the strictest sense, control technology; rather it is technology that controls us. It constitutes a powerful irresistible force that permeates our life.

The term “Technological Determinism” is believed to have been coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), an America sociologist. Like Neil Postman, those who strongly

hold this view, see technology as the basis or the determining force of all human activity (McQuail, 2010; Omenugha, 2015). Its basic principle had long been given expression in the Marxist philosophy and sociology where social change is conceived as primarily a product of economic forces including their technological component. Technological advancement is a vital component of 'production forces' which alongside 'production relations' constitute the 'mode of production' (structure or base) that lies at the root of the superstructure – the cultural spheres of society (Nikitin, 1980; Briel, 2012).

TD is very persuasive to the extent it asserts that technology has played a fundamental role in shaping how we do things. A look at the evolution of human communication shows that technological progress has been a tremendous influence on the mechanism, efficiency and ethos of human endeavour. The implication of this is that humans are compelled to act in certain ways as dictated by the prevailing technological reality.

Nonetheless, the argument of the theory cannot be stretched too far without having to confront the reality of being left with a completely inactive human, totally subjected to the dictates of technology. Such an approach cannot ultimately avoid questions related to who created technology in the first place and whether humans have any influence at all on technology. Hence, TD has been criticised for its technological absolutism. The approach considers technology to be in a position of absolute power over society, which will potentially result to technological fatalism, where people yield to technology their human power to shape their destiny.

Chandler (2000) argues that technological determinists are taking a “reductionist” approach which tends to isolate cause and effect, thus failing to adequately account for the role of technology in society.

In 1962, the Canadian scholar Marshal McLuhan famously applied TD theory to the field of mass communication. According to him, media technology shapes how as individuals, we think, feel, act, “and how the society operates as we move from one technological age to another” (McLuhan, 1962, p.45). The theory asserts that individuals do not possess much free will at all. Therefore, whatever society as a whole uses to communicate, individuals will inevitably adopt the same for communication. In other words, they “will adapt to the medium common in the society so that they can send and receive messages like everyone else” (Griffin, 2000, p.47).

McLuhan contends that an individual learns, feels and thinks the way he or she does due to the messages he or she received through currently available technology. For instance, the radio required just listening and development of our sense of hearing. However, television engages both the hearing and visual senses making us “to transfer those developed senses into our everyday lives and we want to use them again”. Therefore, “the medium is then our message” (McLuhan, 1962, p.66).

McLuhan holds the view that our culture is modelled on how we are able to communicate. First, inventions in communication technology cause cultural change. Secondly, changes in modes of communication shape human life. Thirdly, as

McLuhan himself puts it, “We shape our tools, and they in turn shape us” (Federer, 2009, p.82). According to Leonard (2012), McLuhan’s arguments can be summarised as follows:

1. All technology “is communication, an extension of ourselves that allows us to reach further through time and/or space” (p.44).
2. These “extensions mirror the human body: vehicles extend our feet, machines extend our hands, radio extends our voices, etc. Electricity began a new age, wherein humanity stopped simulating without and began replicating that which is within—the central nervous system. Computers are a great example of this, as they (much like our brains) take basic inputs and, in parallel structuring, create complex patterns of understanding and interaction” (p.45).
3. None “can fully understand a medium until it is no longer the dominant medium and is seen through the lens of the new dominant medium. It is only once a new medium usurps the previous dominant medium that we are able to examine the older medium’s patterns and effects. And it is only on those terms, standing aside from any structure or medium, that its principles and lines of force can be discerned.” (p.45).

Discussing TD theory, Simon (2007) argues that human beings have dominated the natural world through their need to enhance communication. He writes:

We have conquered the globe with our older technology, eliminating the concept of space with virtual extensions of our extremities: vehicles extend our feet cross-country; telescopes enhance our optical capabilities enough to gaze deeper into the heavens than ever thought possible; and even something as simple as the written word, an extension of spoken language through time and space— itself an extension of basic thoughts, feelings, and intent— lets the voices of great minds reach across time to speak to us today. After such a thorough conquering of space and a solid dominance over one aspect of time, the past, it is only natural that we should devote our energies as a species toward the next step, the present. It all started with electricity or, more specifically, the light bulb (pp.234).

Even though this theory was propounded before the era of new media technologies, it has been viewed by some scholars as aptly prophetic in that it seemed to have predicted a future we have with us now (McQuail, 2010; Baran & Davies, 2012). Thus, new media has taken us beyond television, bringing about new imperatives, just as the previous communication technologies did.

The implication is that new media technology has forced changes in our communication culture, conditioning its inner dynamics. A shift in technology inevitably brings about a shift in culture. It has been pointed out that new media technologies have radically altered the modern communication culture in important ways which include increased availability of content, dynamism in content format, flexibility of access to content, cheapness of content, increased interactivity, freedom of expression etc. (Abaji, 2009; John, 2009; McQuail, 2010; Fill, 2011; Salman, Ibrahim, Hj.Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011).

Conboy (2012) contends that 'technology brought journalism into existence and that journalism is very much defined by its continuing ability to react and adapt to changes in the technological environment' (p.148). Particularly, for the newspaper industry the delivery of new media technologies and computerized management has brought invention in modes of content development, production, distribution and media practice. Obviously, these changes have implications for media management. For instance, the use of desktop computers has provided media managers with opportunities to more flexibly conduct their activities. Principally, these opportunities are in relation to networking (communication), production

workflow (operations) and information management (about internal and external stakeholders). Within this context, new media technologies have brought about substantial changes to media operation and management practice, whether in dealing with external stakeholders (such as audience, government and competitors) or in closer monitoring of employees (internal shareholders) whose role also challenges the survival of the media organization. Aggarwal (2002) describes the scenario thus:

The technology of online journalism makes a marked departure from the mass targeting technology to an individualized technology that has the potential of reaching out to a greater audience without being insensitive to the idiosyncrasies of the individual news consumers (p.33).

Hence, new media technologies provide opportunities for media management to target and engage an audience to participate in news content production and dissemination. This aspect of change brought by new media technologies offers a shift from traditional rigid information flow to dynamic information production, online consumption and digital media management practice (Siapera and Veglis, 2012). Consequently, new media technologies have changed the media management practice and the format of news content.

But does the Technological Determinism Theory adequately explain the role of new media in today's newspaper industry? As previously noted, this theory has been criticized for its reductionist approach, its absolutist stance that seems to eliminate every other variable while upholding technology as the lone driver of social change and motivator action (Sassen, 2002; Briel, 2012). It appears to have isolated

technology from the complex social web which it rightly belongs to, thus presenting it as acting alone. Therefore, the theory's techno-reductionism seems to be its major problem just as Marxism's economic reductionism seems to be its weak spot. Social phenomena are quite complex, non-linear, asymmetrical and precarious that any attempt to view the world through a single all-explaining epistemic template potentially tilts towards one-sidedness (Hier, 2005). Marxism (economic reductionism) and Freudianism (pleasure reductionism) present classic examples of such attempts, which have been termed meta-narratives. Thus, by making technology the incontrovertible shaper of culture and cultural change, TD seems to oversimplify what should have been a more complex reality (Sassen, 2002). Advancing this argument, Köchler (2017) states that it 'is an anthropological truth' that the human beings are not programmed to assimilate 'the effects of every new technology.' Humans, according to him, have 'often proven to be resilient to technologically induced forms of social engineering.' Regarding information technology and its promise of bringing about shared social identity, Köchler (2017) observes that this has failed to happen as social identity remain diverse among humans. '[P]eople are simply overwhelmed by the simultaneous presence of a multitude of diverse world-perceptions (and at different stages of their development), which they often feel to be incompatible with their own. Not surprisingly, in today's global information village, citizens may feel their (cultural, social, national) identity constantly being challenged and their "communal security" threatened' (p.8). In summary, therefore, technology doesn't simply dictate people's life. This gap in Technological Determinism gave rise to the Social Construction of Technology model.

Also referred to as Technological Constructivism (TC), the Social Construction of Technology model argues, “that technology does not determine human action, but that rather, human action shapes technology” (Turner, 2011, p.11). It sees technology as being determined by the action of human and his or her society. Put differently, technology, rather than seen as conditioning human and society, is seen as conditioned by human and his or her society. The theory asserts that in the first place, technology has its origin in society’s needs, aspirations and existing social structures (i.e. education, economy, etc.). Thus, it is the existing conditions in society that give birth to technological innovations; such that without the aspirations of society to achieve a particular objective, and without the presence of relevant social elements such as scientific knowledge and economic strength to support research, technology may not see the light of the day. In other words, technology is inevitably embedded in the social domain. Hence, the proponents of this theory “argue that the ways a technology is used cannot be understood without understanding how that technology is embedded in its social context” (Turner, 2011, p.111). This situation explains why certain technologies end up being accepted by society while others are being rejected.

From the perspective of TC theory, new media technologies will be seen as a product of society’s ideologies, desires, aspirations, values etc. In other words, it is society that “created” it to serve its purposes. It has not imposed “change” on society; rather the society wanted the “change” and so developed a technology that would help bring about the change. In the context of newspaper management, this



theory would appear to be suggesting that the prevailing social circumstances as constituted by political, cultural, economic, ethical and legal factors (among others) led to the emergence of new media to replace or exist alongside old media which is no longer adequate for the new social context. Further, the theory will hold that management is antecedent to new media technology; that is, that technology does not impose new management strategy, goals and aspirations, rather technology should be seen as emerging from these. However, this perspective does not exactly fill the gap identified in the Technological Determinism Theory, as it tends towards its own extremism and reductionism by entirely eliminating technology from the social cause-and-effect loop. It fails to give technology any place as a causal variable in the social process, rather treating it as a passive product of that process with no role in shaping the process. Consequently, the theory would not adequately explain the role of new media in today's newspaper industry and the managerial imperatives arising from it.

However, there is a middle way between the two extremes of Technological Determinism and Technological Constructivism (Social Construction of Technology). This moderate approach, which is termed the Dialectical approach to technological effects, seeks to reconcile the two approaches by admitting that while technology influences society, society also influences technology, meaning that both are mutually self-determining (Leonard, 2012). This perspective admits that even though technology changes and conditions society, society also conditions and moderates the role and impact of technology. In other words, "society creates technology and technology creates society; technology does not emerge from

nowhere, it emerges from society and in turn leaves its mark on society” (Leonard, 2012, p.115). The relationship between humans and technology is interactive rather than linear; it is mutual and dynamic rather than one-sided and simplistic. Thus, in the context of media management, new media technologies would not merely impose some operational imperatives on the managers but would also be seen as a “creation” of the newspaper management process itself. The technologies would be seen as bound up with the values, goals and aspirations of the newspaper industry, as against externally shaping them or being shaped by them. This point will be revisited later on in this theoretical discourse.

### Section 3.6.2 Disruptive Technology (DT) Theory

Disruptive Technology (DT) is a concept that denotes the tendency of a new innovation to challenge and alter the values and modus operandi that have defined a given activity. As mentioned before, the term “Disruptive Technology” was coined in 1995 by Clay Christensen and it “refers to a new technology having lower cost and performance measured by traditional criteria, but having higher ancillary performance” (Utterback & Acee, 2003, p.2). Disruptive technology, “disrupts” as it also potentially “sustains” an existing business culture. In order to drive home this contrast, Christensen (1997) explains sustaining technology thus:

What all sustaining technologies have in common is that they improve the performance of established products, along the dimensions of performance that mainstream customers in major markets have historically valued. Most technological advances in a given industry are sustaining in character. [And] ...rarely have even the most radically difficult sustaining technologies precipitated the failure of leading firms (p.11).

From the foregoing, it is seen that a disruptive technology does not merely improve the values which everyday consumers are accustomed to, rather it introduces a new dimension of values, which rather than sustain the conventional standards, disrupts them, thus setting new rules for customer satisfaction and corporate success. Christensen (1997) argues that when a sustaining technology is involved, an old technology is succeeded by a new one which has a better performance. Conversely, when a disruptive technology is involved, the question as to whether the new technology is better than the old one becomes ambiguous if not redundant, being that a disruptive technology is not merely an improvement on an old technology but an embodiment of an entirely new set of uses and values. Consequently, the standards for gauging performance become altered such that the old and the new cannot be weighed on the same scale. Christensen (1997) puts forward the following as features of disruptive technologies:

- Disruptive technologies bring to a market a very different value proposition than had been available previously.
- Generally, disruptive technologies may underperform today, relative to what users in the market demand, but they have other features that a few fringe (and generally new) customers value. However, they may be fully performance-competitive in that same market tomorrow.
- Products based on disruptive technologies are typically cheaper, simpler, smaller, and, frequently, more convenient to use.
- By and large, a disruptive technology is initially embraced by the least profitable customers in a market. Hence, most companies with a practiced discipline of listening to their best customers and identifying new products that promise greater profitability and growth are rarely able to build a case for investing in disruptive technologies until it is too late (p.11).

The first characteristic identifies a disruptive technology with offering 'a very different value proposition than had been available previously.' This feature is already evident in our discussion of the theory so far. It is arguably the major element in the theory; it is this element that primarily distinguishes disruptive

technologies from others. Does new media contain this element vis-à-vis traditional media? There are specific innovations that have occurred in traditional newspaper industry as a result of application of new media technology that deserves some attention it. These include interactivity and multimediality. These two features arguably represent 'a very different value proposition' vis-à-vis what obtained traditionally in newspapers. They represent a new set of standards that may not amount to mere better performance, but indeed a new trajectory. This is amply evident in the fact that these two features have altered both the inward and outward structure of newspaper such that the traditional name 'newspaper' is no longer adequate for describing the new practice. This novel practice is no longer about just 'printing news on paper' but now integrate functions not originally contained in the original practice. So, if we ask whether online newspaper performs better than traditional newspaper, we may run into trouble answering the question given that it will involve making comparison between a print medium and an amorphous medium embodying a wide range of message formats.

The second feature of disruptive technologies identified by Christensen (1997) – which is that they generally 'underperform established products in mainstream markets' but offer some features that appeal to a 'few fringe' customers – appears problematic when be applied to new media vis-à-vis traditional newspaper. This feature of disruptive technology occurs in the early period of the technology; eventually, such technology moves up to also deliver performance required by the mainstream customers, thus taking over the market. However, it is difficult to affirm that online news platforms started by underperforming traditional newspapers

considering the fact that apart from introducing a new set of values and processes, online news platforms improved on some of the key values of traditional news media such as immediacy and believability (through integration of videos, voice etc.). These are values which mainstream consumers would predictably have embraced once presented to them. If it took some time for new media to gain a strong footing in the market, it must have been due to some other factors such as awareness, availability, skill and cost. In Nigeria, for instance, drastic drop in the cost of Internet due to advent of GSM was a key factor in the rapid growth of new media access and use.

The third feature of disruptive technologies as identified by Christensen (1997) is that they are 'are typically cheaper, simpler, smaller, and, frequently, more convenient to use'. The quality of being cheaper will depend on other variables such as competition, demand, supply and similar economic dynamics. In Nigeria, for instance, cost of Internet access was prohibitive initially, but with increasing competition among an increasing number of service providers, cost began to fall drastically. Today, however, it can be said to be quite relatively cheap in terms of using it to access newspapers as one would have to pay 200 naira (52 cents) to purchase a newspaper copy but will use the same amount of data to read several papers online even for more than one day as the case may be. As to being simpler, it may be argued that use of online newspaper demands some skills beyond merely knowing how to read. New media skill must meet literary skill for use to happen. On this account, it will be problematic to describe it as simple vis-à-vis hardcopy newspaper. However, as for being smaller and more convenient to use,

Christensen's description fits new media. The bulkiness of hardcopies disappears when several newspaper 'copies' can be compressed in a smartphone, and the convenience of easy navigation offered by the web is offers an entirely new reading experience for today's news consumer.

Another and very instructive feature which Christensen (1997) identifies in disruptive technologies is that they are initially embraced by a segment of customers not considered as significant in the market, thus companies who have all their attention focused on their 'most important' customers end up not investing early enough in this 'peripheral' technology. It is for this reason that these companies eventually lose their position in the market to companies that adopted the new technology. This is where disruption occurs as new companies topple existing leaders due to prevailing of 'very different' performance standards. Thus, the losers are victims of their fidelity to the established values including as related to focusing attention on the needs of most profitable customers. Therefore, Christensen (1997) states that well managed firms fail simply because they are 'well' managed. This point is amply noted by Christensen, Raynor and McDonald (2015) and it aptly summarises the theory:

"Disruption" describes a process whereby a smaller company with fewer resources is able to successfully challenge established incumbent businesses. Specifically, as incumbents focus on improving their products and services for their most demanding (and usually most profitable) customers, they exceed the needs of some segments and ignore the needs of others. Entrants that prove disruptive begin by successfully targeting those overlooked segments, gaining a foothold by delivering more-suitable functionality—frequently at a lower price. Incumbents, chasing higher profitability in more-demanding segments,

tend not to respond vigorously. Entrants then move upmarket, delivering the performance that incumbents' mainstream customers require, while preserving the advantages that drove their early success. When mainstream customers start adopting the entrants' offerings in volume, disruption has occurred.

Siapera and Veglis (2012) are convinced traditional journalism will suffer the above fate if its managers and practitioners fail to come to terms with their changing environment. Turning to evolutionary biology, the authors draw analogy between journalism and dinosaurs – a species said to have mysteriously gone into extinction 65 million years ago after thriving for 160 million years. They note that print journalism has dominated for over 300 years. However, like dinosaurs, 'it faced a (more or less) sudden threat: the rise of the Internet and digital content platforms; it has difficulties developing new functions to adapt to a changing environment; it faces prolonged stress due to a decrease in profits and an increasingly competitive environment. Will it survive or will it go the way of the dinosaurs?' Answering this question, the authors declare that 'journalism's environment has changed dramatically and journalism needs to develop new functions to adapt to this environment. If it does not, it will face the fate of dinosaurs' (p.3).

While the analysis so far strongly persuades one that there is some truth in the above observation by Siapera and Veglis (2012), an apparent shortcoming of the DT theory is its narrow view of circumstances that prompt companies and customers to adopt a technology. Companies are said to embrace of a disruptive technology owing to conditions around the industry in question; for companies that fail to adopt such technology it is the imperative of focusing attention on the needs of

their most profitable customers, and for those that adopt it, it is because it presents a cheaper and more viable alternative for circumventing what would have been a fruitless attempt to outdo big and established companies. Similarly, the reason customers embrace such technology is restricted to its cheap offer and performance. However, the process of acceptance of technology in society is more complex than this; it goes beyond mere factors of business practices and nature/performance of a technology to include other variables outside the very domain of actual business and transactions. Thus, sociologists have identified political, legal, economic, cultural, demographic and other societal factors as playing intrinsic roles in technology acceptance among individual and groups (Leonard, 2011; Sassen, 2002). On the international level, a factor like globalisation may affect how much disruptive a technology can be in a given country. For instance, given the seamless sharing of information and innovations occasioned by globalisation, one may imagine a scenario where newspapers in Nigeria, having had the privilege of seeing disruptions unfold in western countries where new media gained roots much earlier, resolve not to make the same mistake, thus hastening to adopt these new technologies. If this happens, then the condition given by Christensen (1997) for occurrence of disruption must have been pre-empted as there would be no more room for earlier adoption of the technologies by smaller and peripheral companies. Such prior adoption, according the theory, is the game changer that causes dethronement of erstwhile leaders. So, disruption may also be a function of events occurring even outside the borders of a country. It could as well simply be a function of politics and law. For instance, prior to now in Nigeria, electricity supply and telecommunication services were a legal monopoly of the federal government.



So, from the onset, no room is left for any other player to circumvent the existing market order via adoption of a new technology, as such new technology can only appear in the market through the beneficiaries of the monopoly. Even without the extremity of a monopoly, less obstructive state regulation of an industry may be strong enough to restrict displacement of existing mainstream players. In summary, therefore, new media disruption of traditional media practice may not necessary happen in nation B even though it has happened in nation A, or even if it is so, the extent and form may differ in the two nations to any degree. This is where the postmodernist approach becomes useful in understanding the role of technology. Given its near complete rejection of a static picture of reality, it views technology as dynamic, continuously changing in 'form' and impact from one moment to another. Postmodernism upholds a post-dialectical as against a linear understanding of technology. It problematizes technology as unfixable, refusing to admit a centre (a nucleus) around which technology is symmetrically aligned; rather, it sees it as an asymmetric phenomenon that manifests many changing features. The effect of technology for the postmodernists, in summary, is realized in continuous discontinuity and asymmetry of form and impact (Viies, 2012; Howells, 1998).

Given these shortcomings of the DT, a theory that offers a more multi-layered perspective to technology acceptance becomes important for complementing the two theories already discussed. Consequently, we turn to the Diffusion of innovations (DOI) Theory.

### Section 3.6.3 Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory

The Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory, which has been applied to the understanding of adoption of new media technologies, 'seeks to explain how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures' (Lewis, 2009, p.201). Summarizing the essence of the theory, McCarthy (1998) writes:

It originated in communication to explain how, over time, an idea or product gains momentum and diffuses (or spreads) through a specific population or social system. The end result of this diffusion is that people, as part of a social system, adopt a new idea, behaviour, or product. Adoption means that a person does something differently than what they had previously (i.e., purchase or use a new product, acquire and perform a new behaviour, etc.). The key to adoption is that the person must perceive the idea, behaviour, or product as new or innovative. It is through this that diffusion is possible (p.78).

Rogers (1962) states that there are four main elements that influence the spread of a new idea among a population. They are the innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system. By innovation is meant 'an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption.' Communication channels refer to means by which messages are transmitted from person to person. Time is also known as 'innovation-decision period' which is the length of time it takes for one to decide on adopting an innovation. Lastly, social system refers to a 'set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal.' It is the social system that conditions the diffusion process, sets the norms that guide the process, and determines roles of actors in the process including opinion leaders and change agents. It also influences innovation decisions made by people and the consequences of any innovation. Thus, unlike the DT theory, DOI locates technology adoption and its consequences (including disruption) in the wider social system where actors are connected in a complex

dynamic web of continuous mutual interaction. Therefore, adoption and possible disruptive impact of new media technology may not be determined by mere circumstances of technology performance and business practices, but by the entire web of interactions that constitute the social system. This is obviously a more persuasive approach.

Rogers (1962) states further that Innovation, communication channels, time, and social system work in concert with one another to spread an innovation. Nonetheless, individuals within a social system do not embrace an innovation without making certain assessments on it. They consider the extent the innovation appears better than the one it is replacing (relative advantage), the extent it addresses the values, experiences, and needs of such individual (compatibility), the extent the innovation may pose some difficulty of understanding and/or use (complexity), the extent one may possibly test the technology before making a commitment towards adoption (triability), and the extent to which the results of the innovation can be tangibly observed (observability).

The DT theory also posits that adoption decisions may be made and 'implemented voluntarily by an individual or be compulsively made' (Rogers, 1962). Hence, three types of innovation-decisions are identified by the theory: (i) **optional innovation-decision** made by an individual that is somehow distinguished from others in a social system; (ii) **collective Innovation-decision** taken collectively by all persons in a social system; and (iii) **authority Innovation-decision** which is a decision made for the whole social system by a few individuals who exercise influence or power. In

authority innovation-decision is reflected the kind of scenario painted earlier in Nigeria where government regulation may condition the form and extent of innovation. While Rogers tries to distinguish individual innovation-decision from collective innovation-decision and authority innovation-decision, it is important to observe here that no individual decision can possibly occur outside the social system; it is invariably influenced by the social system; the individual's judgments and actions on these innovations are also a function of the standards and other imperatives created by the social system, which encompasses political, cultural, demographic, legal and economic dimensions among others. So, it is either that Rogers failed to recognise this fact or that his distinguishing between the individual and the collective/authoritative was merely for convenience.

Importantly, the DOI theory acknowledges that adoption of an innovation does not happen simultaneously among all individuals and segments of a social system; rather some people are more likely to adopt an innovation faster than others. Rogers (1962) identifies five different "adopter categories" based on their likely order of adopting an innovation. They are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. While innovators are the quickest to adopt – lively and adventurous, the laggards are at the other end of the spectrum – conservative and very suspicious of change. The early adopters are the opinion leaders whose judgments, footsteps and experiences inspire the early majority towards adoption. The late majority are more sceptical, they would need to see the innovation perform well among the early majority before they adopt it. This categorisation by Rogers underlines the possible influence of demographics in adoption of a

technology. In Nigeria, for instance, new media adoption is concentrated among the southern population as against the northern population (Nigeria Communications Commission, NCC, 2018; Anyanwu, 2019) where factors of political and religious nature have been identified as engendering an endemic degree of cultural conservatism that tends to resist innovation (Amzat, 2017).

Lastly, Rogers (1962) notes that innovation adoption by an individual occurs across the five stages of knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. One stage may or may not lead to the next depending on how positively a preceding stage resolves. The most difficult of the stages, however, is the decision stage wherein the individual assesses the innovation, weighs its advantages and disadvantages and decides whether to adopt or reject it.

Instructively, the usefulness of the DOI perspective is underscored by fact that some other popular theories and models for understanding technology acceptance appear quite restrictive in their approaches. For instance, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), restricts penetrability (or acceptance) of technology to the function of three key variables: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived self-efficacy (Fathema, Shannon & Ross, 2015; Fathema, Ross & Witte, 2014; Bagozzi, Davis & Warshaw 1992; Bagozzi, 2007). Obviously, without factoring in the social system, this theory cannot effectively account for how these judgments of usefulness, ease of use and self-efficacy come through. The same limitation also characterises the Epidemic Model which likens technology as an infectious disease which 'infection rate' will be determined by factors like simplicity, density and

homogeneity of the receiving population, as 'simplicity' and 'density' cannot be fully accounted for outside the consideration of individual's education, level of skill, experience, social norm and standards which are all inscribed in the social system.

However, Lyytinen and Damsgaard (2001) criticises the DOI theory for apparently drawing a line strictly between an innovation and a social system. This way, he fails to account for 'complex and networked technologies'. Such technologies include:

[E]lectrical supply systems, which contain messy, complex problem solving elements. They are both socially constructed and society shaping. Understanding these technologies requires appreciating the complex network of actors and factors that embody and shape it including the organizations that manufacture them, the organizations that use them, scientific communities, legislators, regulators etc... These systems are difficult to control and manage due to their messy institutional character, broad scope and longevity (p.175).

This criticism does not appear to be exactly correct given that Rogers' 'social system' is conceptualised as a holistic network encompassing everything that embodies an innovation and its spread among a people. Social system is a 'set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal.' These units would include innovations, humans and institutions. The only problem here is the restricted role assigned to these units – 'joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal'. All social units are not conforming to society's common goals. For instance, cyberterrorists and cyberfraudsters are part of the social system and so necessarily have some influence on what becomes of the Internet technology. The fact that a technology can be put to criminal or immoral uses may be a stumbling block to its acceptance among certain segments

of society. It may also shape the form and strictness of its regulation; another factor that may determine adoption.

Importantly, Lyytinen and Damsgaard's (2001) criticism seems to have fallen into the error of excluding some technologies from being 'complex and networked'. Is there a technology that can be adequately conceived outside the complexity and connectedness of the social system? Our answer is in the negative. A technology does not have to appear as colossal as electrical supply systems (cited by the authors) before we can locate it within the 'messy' complex network of the social system. Taking the smartphone in Nigeria as an example, this seemingly simple and distinct technology is completely entrapped in the complexity of the social system. Smartphone is a technology imported from foreign countries; the trade process including exchange rate, import duties and regulations affect it, including by determining its price which surely influences adoption. At the political level, it is affected by laws related to telecommunications including SIM card acquisition and Internet use. At the international level, Nigeria's membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and trade agreements with manufacturing countries such as China and Sweden are an important factor in the availability and penetrability of this technology. Smartphone is also a 'creation' of local trade dynamics including as related to competitions among importers and distributors. For instance, it was the strategy of some companies to start importing cheap smartphones from China that heightened local competition which in turn forced down prices and increased penetrability. The social connectedness of this small technological piece cannot be exhaustively accounted for. Granted that certain technologies may be more socially

connected than others, no technology can be adequately accounted for outside this social connectedness.

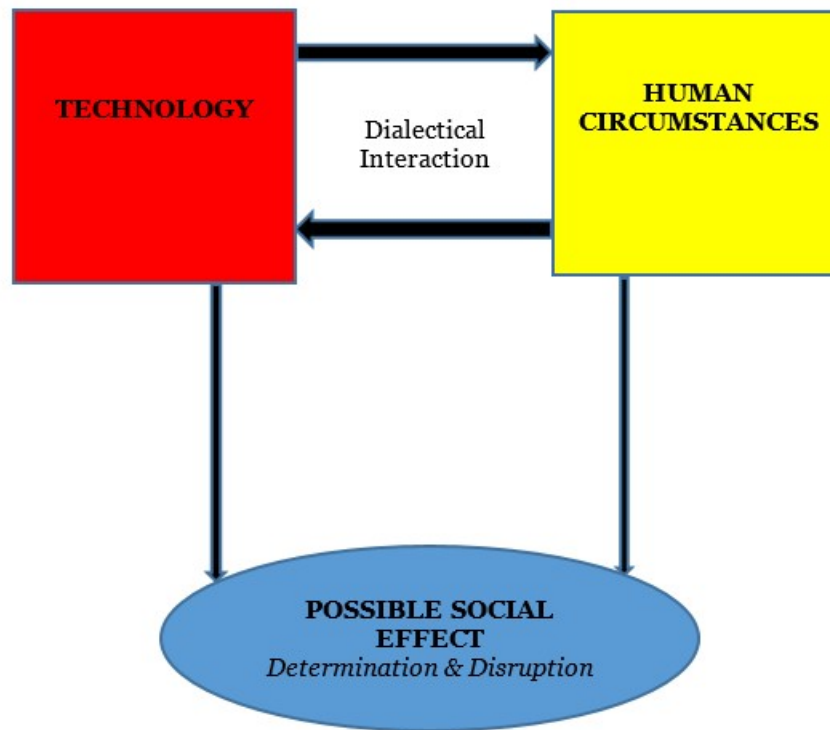
#### Section 3.6.4 *Techno-Human Dynamism: An Integrative Working Model*

As became clear from the previous sections, TD, DT and DOI all have severe gaps in either their conceptualisation and/or application. However, parts of them remain quite useful for the purpose of this study. The three theories help to address our concern – how a technology (new media) seems to alter the existing way of doing things in newspaper industry. Technological Determinism (TD) helps to view new media as a technology that permeates modern newspaper culture, determining the direction it goes. The Disruptive Technology (DT) is more exact in describing the nature of this direction – *disruptive direction*. It situates this disruption in a social process of adoption-versus-non-adoption which eventually produces disruption with the attendant losers and gainers. The adoption and non-adoption process is rooted in the nature of a technology as well as the positioning of a company in a given industrial matrix i.e. as a big mainstream investor or a small peripheral player. Then, the Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) focuses less on technology and more on the process of its adoption as implicated in the *social system*, conceived as an all-encompassing domain integrating all actors in the innovation process.

Against this backdrop, an integrative model is put forward to synthesise three approaches: the one that views technology as a singular *determinist* element, the one that views it as interacting with industry conditions to generate *disruption*, and the one that locates technology in a holistic social matrix that determines its



adoption or otherwise. These three approaches are represented respectively by TD, DT and DOI theories. The Model is termed *Techno-Human Dynamism Model*, and its underlying logic is as follows: New media *determines* (shapes) and *disrupts* the operation of newspaper industry but in so doing must negotiate with other social variables with which it forms a single social unit.



**Figure 11:** *The Techno-Human Dynamism Model* as put forward by the study (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).

Both the TD and DT theories make a valid claim as to the place of technology in shaping our social circumstances by pointing out that our previous way of approaching life could be rendered inefficient or even completely irrelevant by changes in the technological realm. On the other hand, however, the two theories – especially the TD – appear to neglect the corresponding influence of human social

circumstances on technological changes. Is it technology that determines culture or culture that determines technology? Is it technology that disrupts human acts or human acts that disrupt technology? Was it not the human invention of the combustion engine that disrupted the role and relevance of the steam engine? Ultimately, these theories leave unanswered the question of the nature of the relationship between technology and culture, whether it is technology that determines or disrupts culture or culture that determines or disrupts technology. In other words, they apparently fail to make distinctly clear how “determination” and “disruption” are realised in the face of the invariably dialectical orientation of human reality.

To understand the above working model better, it is necessary to further clarify the concepts that make it up. *Determination* refers to the tendency to shape or dictate how things are done. Here, it is viewed as new media technology’s capacity to fundamentally alter practices and ethos in the sphere of newspaper business. It is an admission of the sheer power of technology to shape reality in line with the postulations of the TD theory. On the other hand, *disruption* defines more precisely the nature of this shaping of reality attributed to new media. It constructs this effect in more specific terms as “turbulence”, “crisis” or “destabilisation” bearing in mind that *determination* can connote and denote different things. It can imply improvement, stabilisation, alteration or even destruction. Therefore, *disruption* represents a more differentiated realisation of *determination* to give it a more specific character. While *determination* is the foundation (or the overarching

principle), *disruption* is a more specific off-shoot that defines the exact nature of the *determination*.

The above conceptualisation integrates both TD theory and DT theory into a systematic new whole that articulates the effects of technology both in its generalised and more specific moments. The usefulness of this approach lies in its attempt to capture technological effect via a picture that is both holistic and specific, generalised and localised.

*Human circumstances* in the above working model refer to the prevailing conditions of the human users of technology. However, *human circumstances* cannot, *stricto sensu*, be differentiated from technology because technology is an integral part of human circumstances. Much as technology is created in the lab, it is still a product of social process. French philosopher and scientist, Bruno Latour (as cited in Kofman, 2018), following his research in the social construction of scientific knowledge, concludes that scientific progress, as against being wholly located in laboratory, owes a lot to events that occur outside the purely scientific process. These events are located in the social structure and practice surrounding scientific research (Kofman, 2018). Kofman reports that following Latour's observational study of scientists working in laboratories, he became more convinced that scientific facts are products of a social process involving humans and institutions with all their inherent biases. Any instance of scientific knowledge relies on a particular institutional and cultural set-up to be affirmed and sustained. Thus, any

radical change in such set-up throws up a radical “breakthrough” in scientific knowledge (Kofman, 2018).

Thus, our working model posits that neither *technology* nor *human circumstances* can, in the strictest practical sense, be severed from each other. They remain interlocking and inextricable. *Technology* is part of the *human (social) circumstances* of the newspaper business and vice versa; hence there is a dialectical interaction between the two, and which is the source of the *determination* and *disruption*, as can be seen in the model. In this sense, *technology* and *human circumstances* merge into each other to form a hybrid i.e. an integrative whole encompassing the technological piece and other co-existing and co-emerging social variables. Hence, *determination* and *disruption* are more understood, not in the sense of an external force acting on the newspaper industry, but as forming a continuum of social process encompassing the nature of technology, industry conditions, politics, law, economy, culture, demography etc. Here lies the meeting point between the *Techno-Human Dynamism Model* and the PEST Model discussed in chapter two.

Therefore, *Techno-Human Dynamism* puts forward a holistic approach to integrate *determinism* and *disruption* as aptly argued by the Technological Determinism and Disruptive Technology, with other variables prevailing around the newspaper business, with which they form a whole. It is an integration of the whole and the part, simplicity and dynamism, linearity and dialectics.

Hence, *Techno-Human Dynamism* is designed to embody the two-dimensional imperative of the managerial approach of any media organization seeking to survive and to maximize its potential in the new media or digital era. These organizations may have to adopt managerial approaches that embody both the technological imperative and the human imperative i.e. that are both technologically and socially responsive. Stated differently, their managerial approaches ought to adopt an emerging technology but at the same time, *ought not to lose sight of the social circumstances within which this technology subsists*. The managerial approaches will be such that uphold the philosophy that technology, strictly speaking, cannot be isolated from the larger social realm.

The imperative of an integrative working model like this is underscored by the fact that every clime presents its own peculiar circumstances. The *determining* and *disruptive* impact of new media in Nigeria as a developing country may not precisely reflect the pattern unfolding in developed countries from where the entire discourse of new media effect has originated. Further, Nigeria may also have her own specific, local circumstances that differentiate her from other developing countries. Thus, localising the application of technology theories through a working model like *Techno-Human Dynamism* is arguably informed. Hence, through the conceptual lens view of *Techno-Human Dynamism*, this study intends to interrogate the situation of the Nigerian Newspaper industry in the face of the emerging new media realities. Thus, in line with the objectives of the study (as formulated in Chapter 1, Section 1.3), this working model will pose questions as follows:

**Objective 1: To examine the nature and extent of disruption being experienced by the Nigerian newspaper industry as a result of the advent of new media:** How is the newspaper industry in Nigeria experiencing the disruption predicted in the TD and DT? What are the peculiarities of this disruption, if any, as viewed within the specific circumstances of the Nigerian newspaper industry? In other words, how does the envisaged disruption unfold in the industry? In short, what is *disruption* within the specific context of the Nigerian newspaper industry taking into consideration its history, present and likely future?

**Objective 2: To examine how Nigerian newspaper managers attempt to cope with the challenges stemming from the penetration of new media into the country's mass communication space:** How is the Nigerian newspaper managers responding to these challenges? Does the response reckon with the imperatives of the technology? Does it at the same time reckon with specific local circumstances, which might be conditioning the technology?

**Objective 3: To explore future possibilities for the Nigerian newspaper industry in terms of coping with the threats posed to its survival by new media:** What future prospects do new media technologies represent for the newspaper industry in Nigeria? Are these prospects the same as elsewhere? Are their local circumstances affecting the prospects? What can the industry do within the context of global and local imperatives?

These are the far-reaching and necessary questions, which this study seeks to answer. What methods are employed to seek answers to the questions raised is the focus of the next chapter - Methodology.

## Chapter 4 Methodology

Methodology, according to Williams (2011), gives “a clear-cut idea on what the researcher is” doing in “his or her research” as well as “guides the researcher [...] in his or her particular field of enquiry” (p.43). Therefore, this chapter sets out the methodology for this research. It does so by explaining the research design and area of study before proceeding to present the procedure for the key informant interview (KII) and focus group discussion (FGD), the population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instruments for data collection and method of data collection. For the justification offered in section 1.2, this thesis focuses on *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *Daily Trust* and *Daily Times* newspapers and offers insights into their operations and management experience. This offers an apt platform from which to understand and examine the effect of new media technologies on newspaper management in the light of the socio-political and economic context of Nigeria. The chapter ends with an explanation of the method of data analysis that is employed.

The research design adopted for this study is a mixed qualitative method, encompassing key informant interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This approach aims to accumulate a detailed account of phenomena taking place in the Nigerian newspaper industry within the contexts of the challenges (impact) of new media technologies. Furthermore, the use of non-numerical data allows this research to effectively explore and describe how key players such as the media producers (management) and consumers (audiences) behave, experience and understand the technological changes occurring in the Nigerian newspaper industry. Hence, while the KII will generate data from media managers, the FGD will



do the same with Nigerian newspaper readers. Both research methods complement each other. They further generate insights from managerial and audience perspectives and ultimately answer the research questions as listed in section 1.4. This approach is consistent with the views of Denzin and Lincoln (2003, p.8), “that the use of combination of research methods reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question ... a strategy that adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry.”

The researcher interviewed managers of select newspapers (*The Sun, The Nation, Daily Trust* and *Daily Times*) to explore trends in the management of Nigerian newspapers. The research questions considered include *the nature and extent of disruption experienced by the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a result of new media technology; how the managers coped with the challenges; what the future holds in possibilities and challenges.*

This was augmented with focus group interview with randomly selected sample population of Nigerian newspaper readers (see subsection 4.8.2 for selection process and justification). As this study attempts to examine people’s opinion vis-à-vis how much the Nigerian newspapers are able to achieve audience satisfaction in the context of the new media environment, the Reader Focus Groups discussion proves useful. Moreover, the Reader Focus Groups discussion provides a framework to examine how and to what extent new media technologies may have affected hardcopy newspaper patronage.

## Section 4.1 General Review on Qualitative Research

This research is qualitative in approach. As rightly argued by Yates (2004), a qualitative work attempts to offer one or more of the following:

- Achieve an in-depth understanding and detailed description of a particular aspect of an individual, a case history or a group's experience(s);
- Explore how individuals or group members give meaning to and express their understanding of themselves, their experiences and/or their worlds;
- Find out and describe in detail social events and to explore why they are happening, rather than how often;
- Explore the complexity, ambiguity and specific detailed processes taking place in a social context (p.138).

Therefore, qualitative researchers are concerned with 'understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world' (Merriam, 2009; p.13).

Dörnyei, (2007, p.132) notes that qualitative data are 'most often' collected by researchers through interviews and questionnaires. However, interviews - compared to questionnaires - are considered suitable in eliciting narrative data that allows researchers to study people's views in greater depth (Kvale, 1996; 2003). Not only do interviews build a holistic snapshot, analyse words, report detailed views of informants; they also enable interviewees to "speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings" (Berg, 2007; p.96). As interviews are interactive, naturalistic and less structured data collection tool, interviewers can press for complete, clear answers as well as probe into any emerging topics, ultimately broadening the scope for an understanding of investigated phenomena.

Qualitative research method potentially affords researchers and practitioners in diverse fields the framework to address questions about people's ways of organizing, relating to, and interacting with the world. Arguably, this interdisciplinary value recognition explains why 'qualitative research' is considered a non-unified field of theory and practice (Bickman & Rog, 2009). In other words, there is not a uniform view about what qualitative research is, how and why it should be conducted, how it should be analysed, and in what form it should be presented. In fact, there exist fundamental disagreements about philosophical assumptions and the nature of data among qualitative researchers. While some definitions of qualitative research such as the one by Parkinson & Drislane (2011) were made from an epistemological point of view, other definitions such as the one from Denzin & Lincoln (2005) focus on the process and context of data collection.

Parkinson & Drislane (2011) define qualitative research in terms of approaches such as participant observation or case studies, which result in a descriptive account of a practice. The authors note that sociological researchers applying these methods usually reject positivism and adopt a form of interpretive sociology. From the perspective of Denzin & Lincoln (2005), qualitative research involves an interpretive approach to studying practices in their 'natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (p. 3).

Notwithstanding definition form, no one single approach or viewpoint could be said to be superior to the other because researchers approach qualitative research (or

even research in general) from a variety of positions including personality, professionalism, availability of funding and research context (Merriam, 2009). Consequently, there is no one ideal way of undertaking a qualitative research project. However, some methodologies and instruments are more appropriate for certain types of inquiry.

Basic research (also referred to as 'pure' or 'fundamental' research) is an exploratory inquiry conducted without any practical end-use in mind (Bickman & Rog, 2009). It is concerned with developing scientific knowledge and predictions. Basic research is driven by intellectual curiosity and may lead to either an invention of a new theory (as was the case with Einstein's theory of Relativity and Newton's contributions) to physics or a refinement of an existing theory. Therefore, as the term 'fundamental' suggests, basic research may provide a basis for further, sometimes applied research.

On the other hand, applied research "strives to improve our understanding of a problem, with the intent of contributing to the solution of that problem" (Bickman & Rog, 2009, p. x). Typically, this form of research is founded in systematic and scientific methodology that is practical in nature. Therefore, the primary focus of applied research is on collecting and generating data to further knowledge of real-world problems. Moreover, in generating new knowledge, the research contributes to theory. It is through this applied research framework that this study is conducted, with the intent of providing answers to research questions, including: *what trends can be observed in Nigerian newspaper media management at a time new media*

*are posing a threat to the survival of traditional newspapers?* With practical Newspaper Managers' and Newspaper Readers' interviews as tools, the research aims to collect and manage qualitative data in a rigorous and transparent manner.

Another justification for applying qualitative open-ended questions is that this allows the study to obtain information not anticipated by a researcher. This researcher had framed research questions also from a self-perspective and experience with the subject-matter. However, during interviews, some responses from the participants broadened the researcher's viewpoints and allowed for further interrogation. Hence, the process became progressively expository, allowing the researcher to make further probing based on revelations of the respondents. Compared with quantitative research, any response that falls outside of the fixed range or interval is lost. Moreover, regarding the issue of validity, the process of collecting qualitative data provides an additional advantage. In qualitative inquiry, interrogation is open-ended and allows responses to be provided in the participants' own words. This is helpful for allowing researcher and research assistants to ask questions differently depending on prevailing contexts. This is in contrast to survey questions that are fixed.

Despite encapsulating the benefits and justification for applying qualitative research to studies, this discourse would be failing if the weaknesses and disadvantages associated with qualitative methodology were not noted. One limitation of a qualitative research approach is that proper analysis of data is time-consuming. Proper analysis in qualitative research involves collecting (interviewing),

transcribing (listening and note-taking), coding and interpreting data. Where research is done in a local language, an extra step of translation needs to be added to the analysis process. Although in most cases, large samples are not needed for qualitative inquiry, the analysis processes remain rigorous and time-consuming. Moreover, given the small and mostly non-probabilistic samples in qualitative research, the ability to claim a representative sample is often diminished, and statistical generalization potentially proves impractical. Put differently, qualitative research is potentially limited by non-substantial variation measurement of responses.

In conclusion, the nature of this study is one which seeks to understand specific individuals' (Nigerian newspapers managers' and readers') views in greater depth. Therefore, the study necessitates a qualitative research approach in order to achieve its objectives. Moreover, when compared to quantitative approaches, interviewing and other qualitative methods provide this study with the framework to analyze the resulting data while making an allowance for participants' social variants.

#### **Section 4.2 Area/Population of Study**

One distinguishing feature of Nigeria is its large population. The last national census in 2006 put the population at 140,431,790 people, while current estimates, as per March 2018, put the country's population at over 184 million (National Population Commission, 2018). It is worth noting that after New Guinea and Indonesia, Nigeria ranks as the 3<sup>rd</sup>-most ethnically and linguistically diverse country in the world

(Blench, & Dendo, 2003). The ethnic and cultural diversity of Nigeria has already been discussed in more details in chapter two. This diversity guided the researcher in selecting the locations for the focus group discussion sessions as will be seen in section 4.3 below.

#### Section 4.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure for FGD

Considering that national dailies enjoy widespread readership across the length and breadth of Nigeria, 24 discussants were randomly selected from the geographical poles/locations in the country. The discussants share the common characteristic of being readers of newspapers found at newspaper stands (they belong to what is commonly known as the Free Readers Association). Being at the newspaper stand reading a newspaper indicates that the discussants find newspapers compelling enough to visit the stands to obtain 'free' information. They do not need to pay to read the papers, or sometimes they pay a very minimal token, to be allowed to read. This way, many of them are not affected by the economic constraints that deter many people from buying newspapers (Omenugha, 2015). These free readers are an unsettled and fluid population, and because they are highly mobile and do not stay in one place, the researcher has called them "readers in motion". Thus, their selection is purposively random, as their participation depends on their availability.

The first stage of this sampling involves clustering Nigeria into the four (4) geographical poles, which include: east (SE), west (SW), north (NE, NW, NC) and south (SS). For effective spread, one state was randomly selected to represent all

the states in each geographical location. The selected states for this study are: Anambra State (east), Lagos State (west), Abuja (north) and Rivers State (south). The selection of these four States was informed by the need to achieve a geographical spread and accommodate the ethnic and religious diversity of the people of Nigeria. Thus, Anambra was selected from the east, Lagos from the west, Abuja from the north and Rivers from the south. Ultimately, the three major ethnic groups of Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani as well as minority ethnicities were respectively represented. Furthermore, for each of the States, a newspaper stand was selected in its capital city. Due to nature of rural-urban immigration as discussed in subsection 2.2.2, cities in Nigeria are home to people of various cultural orientations. Consequently, the focus on the cities of these selected States (across the 4 geographical poles) offers this research higher chances of sampling and selecting respondents from various backgrounds. Respondents came with different experiences to enrich the study. Hence, the sites purposively sampled and selected are; Aroma junction (Awka, Anambra State), Ojota junction (Ikeja, Lagos State), Sky Memorial junction (Wuse, Abuja) and Rumukoro junction (Port Harcourt, Rivers State). These FGD sites share similar features: they are busy metropolitan areas with large populations with parks, eateries, markets and offices within reach. The readers found in the places are also cosmopolitan. For instance, Rumuokoro is a town in the Obio-Akpor local government area of Rivers State. The junction where the FGD took place serves as a meeting point for five major roads in the State and is the gateway to and from the city of Port Harcourt. The strategic positioning of these selected junctions makes them suitable to be selected, sampled and visited for the FGD/interviewing of newspaper audiences found at its newspaper stands.



The next stage involves the random selection of discussants from these aforementioned selected major junctions in the cities across the States. Researchers have suggested between five and eight as good number for focus group discussion (Barbour & Schostak, 2005). With this in mind, the researcher considers the sample size of 24 discussants as appropriate, as this translates to six (6) discussants per focus group per each FGD site. Thus, a total of four (4) focus group discussion sessions were conducted for this study – one for each geographical pole. Given the mobile nature of this population, the researcher inquired from each potential discussant whether they were a resident of the city or not before selection.

The next section offers an explanation of the free readers' association concepts. It provides background information to the Nigerian newsstands as well as the country's newspaper buying and reading culture.

#### **Section 4.4 The Free Readers Association Concept: A Synopsis of Nigerian newsstands newspaper buying and reading culture**

At this juncture, it may be relevant to say a few words about Nigerian newsstands and newspaper buying and reading culture. Newsstands (alongside vendors) are the retail points in the chain of newspaper distribution. Once newspaper copies leave the offices of a newspaper organization, the first destination basically is the sales offices of that newspaper organization located in different parts of the country. The circulation officer in each of the offices then ensures the copies get to the offices of the distributors within the area covered by the officer. These distributors are independent agents who act as middlepersons between a newspaper organization

and copy retailers. The copy retailers then obtain copies from the distributors for onward sale to readers via newsstands or mobile vending.

Newsstands and mobile vending are the major newspaper buying and reading outlets for the majority of the population (Nkemdilim, 2015). Nonetheless, there is still direct subscription by organisations and individuals who, however, constitute only a small proportion of the reading population (Eze, 2017).

Eze (2017) observes that research has shown that there are two categories of newspaper readers in the country. The first category is what he terms active readers; this group consciously seek out newspapers to read. This group is more likely to buy copies either via newsstands/vendors or direct subscription. The second category, according to Eze, is passive readers; a group that reads newspapers usually if and only when they come across them at places like hotels, eateries, offices, libraries and other public places where newspapers may be kept for public access. This group hardly ever buys copies; members merely read free copies they come across in an opportunistic fashion.

However, newsstands typically bring these two groups together, active readers who come to read and/or buy papers and passive readers who merely stop by to read. Since newsstands dynamically offer buying and free-reading opportunities, they naturally accommodate these two categories of readers plus usual non-readers who purchase copies occasionally to see materials of interests such as job adverts. However, newsstands are more than mere selling points, as they are also sites for

discussion and engagement by readers based on what they read in the papers. At any point during the day, one may encounter one or more groups around a newsstand discussing and arguing. Among them are free readers who may also buy a title after reading several of them as well as those who have merely come to buy copies and stayed briefly to listen to or participate in the discussion.

In view of the foregoing, voices from newsstands, arguably, are significant for understanding the dynamics of newspaper buying and reading habits in Nigeria. These represent the voices of readers/buyers of varying disposition. Importantly, the bulk of the copy sales happen at newsstands (Eze, 2017), making them important spots for feeling the heartbeat of newspaper circulation in the country.

#### **Section 4.5 Data Collection**

The instruments for data collection are an interview guide for KII (See Appendix I) and a question catalogue (group dynamics) for FGDs (See Appendix II). They contain questions posed to the respondents as well as the information the researcher looks for in the answers given by the respondents (Newspaper managers and readers), and the key points, which impinge on the research questions. As contended by Richards (2003, p.53), the instrument for data collection guides and ensures that the study “always seek(s) the particular” from the participants. The two sub-sections that follow explain in more details the data collection procedure for the KII and the FGD aspects of the study.

#### **Section 4.5.1 Key Informant Interview Procedure**

The interview sessions were conducted in a face-to-face mode as this enhances trust and involvement on the part of the interviewees. Interviewees were first contacted through referrals. On first contact via email, the researcher introduced himself and explained to each interviewee the subject of the proposed interview. Of the seven (7) Nigerian national newspaper organizations purposively contacted and with several follow up/ reminder emails, four (4) responded and offered consent to serve as research sources. Even though the study is designed for four (4) national newspapers, the steps taken to contact the seven newspaper organizations was a strategic one and aimed at guarding against any possible disappointments. This decision proved justified and useful as three of the contacted newspaper organisations failed to honour their pledge to be part of the study.

The researcher may not be quite sure why exactly those who consented to participate did so, but their motivations are certainly varied. It could possibly be because the study's objectives appealed to them and fuelled their desire to contribute to the growing discourse on the challenges of new media technologies on the management of Nigerian newspaper organizations. This is highly probable, as some of these interested newspaper organizations had indicated an interest in receiving a copy of the study on completion. The researcher quickly saw this as an incentive (see discussion on use of incentive in subsection 4.7.2) and assured the participating newspaper organizations that the completed study would be shared with them. Convincing them to participate in the interview was not easy, as the researcher had to contend with their busy and tight schedule. In retrospect, this

experience afforded the researcher insights into how busy and demanding the schedules and responsibilities of the Nigerian newspaper managers are. It also sharpened the negotiation skills of the researcher as it became apparent that getting positive responses for interviews is not a simple engagement.

Nevertheless, with the consent obtained from the four leading Nigerian national newspaper organizations, a preliminary research visit was undertaken to their headquarters in Lagos and Abuja. These two locations - a former (Lagos) and current (Abuja) Federal Capital Territories respectively are several hours away from each other (see map 1: Major cities and ethnic groups in present-day Nigeria) and the research visit was ultimately conducted on different days and at different times. The visits provided an opportunity for the actual interview date and time to be agreed upon by the respective parties (researcher and the various newspaper organization managers). This step and arrangement was considered helpful in supporting the interest of the parties regarding planning, an exercise considered critical to conducting research. The planning particularly ensured that the researcher mitigated the loss of time, resources and effort while conducting the KII.

On the scheduled day, interview sessions were held at the offices of the respondents and each interview lasted for about 90 minutes. As to typical duration, Schostack (2002) notes, an interviewer would be expected to spend at least half an hour unravelling an investigated phenomenon in an interview. Nevertheless, this assertion overlooks the question that Dörnyei (2007) refers to as often not mentioned in research designs, which is whether to have single or multiple

interview sessions. Clearly, the answer to this is based on time restraints, the research questions, available sources and amount of data needed. Given that qualitative interviews are typically rich in detail as well as generate large amounts of data (Neuman, 2007), the researcher opted for 90 minutes, a timeframe which enabled respondents to exhaustively deal with the research questions. It also provided an opportunity for the researcher to access a large amount of generated data and to move into a better position to choose high-yield answers during analysis and interpretation. The sessions were held on different dates and at different times for each of the selected newspaper organization as the researcher was unable to secure appointments on the same day for all the newspaper organizations, because of the differences in each organization engagement and schedules. Moreover, the managers specifically engaged for each of these newspapers were the MD/E-in-C, EDM/MM and DE.

Before the commencement of each interview session, the researcher ensured that an appropriate atmosphere was established through which individual respondents would feel more at ease and thus talk freely. As noted by Dörnyei (2007), a 'good' qualitative interview has two key features: "(a) it flows naturally, and (b) it is rich in detail" (p. 140). Moreover, Barbour and Schostak (2005, p.42-43) identify power relation as key concept that should guide researchers when applying interviews as a data collection tool. Power relation refers to the interrelated power within the interview. Such power may (intentionally or unintentionally), but not necessarily, emerge from the interviewer's side towards the interviewees. Ultimately, to

balance this relationship, the researcher would have to consider the under-listed variables:

- i. Value, which refers to the value of the interview itself, and the value of the interviewees' words.
- ii. Trust that demonstrates the extent to which the research guarantees objectivity, accuracy and honesty.
- iii. Meaning, which entails the significance the interviewer intends to convey.

This process might sometimes be incorrectly done, and therefore an alternative truth or reality might be declared.

- iv. Wording, which implies the expression of questions asked in the interview.

Barbour and Schostak (2005: 43) note that "the shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the subject's answers, the better an interview is".

Consequently, the researcher ensured the respondents saw value in offering their time for the interview session and appreciated the significance of the study to the Nigerian media industry, as already stated under sections 1.2 (Rationale for the Study) and 1.5 (Significance of the Study). The researcher had also to consider ethical issues at all stages of the interview process. Before participating and on commencement of an interview session, a brief explanation of the study's nature and the respondents' rights were stated. The individual respondents (newspaper managers) provided informed consent and were made aware of the fact that their participation in the interview was entirely voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time. This help put individual respondents at ease as well as earned their trust for the session.

Therefore, as the KII progressed, the researcher paid more attention to listening than just speaking, while all the time taking down notes on some of the salient points raised by the managers in response to questions. The respondents' submissions were also recorded using a digital recorder and a recording smartphone for backup. Recording an interview is a major step in data collection as researchers rely on it to generate insights and make 'invaluable interpretations' (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000; p.160). As this study opted for an open-ended interview, which yields word-based accounts, considerably more space was taken for the recorded sessions to be transcribed, analysed and interpreted by the researcher.

At the end of each interview session, the researcher offered an opportunity for the individual respondent to bring up comments or ask questions. Here, most respondents enquired and tried to know more about the researcher's personal background, an interaction which typically advances understanding for them. However, the researcher avoided giving too much information to ensure that any close relationship with the respondents does not influence the interpretation of data. Additionally, the researcher, at this point, re-expressed gratitude to the respondents and re-iterated the promised incentive. Even though a pilot study is advocated for a number of reasons, such as sharpening the interview skills of the researcher, the researcher did not consider a pilot study necessary in this case. Principally, the various emails exchanged with the participants had smoothened the process as some of them responded copiously to the questions via emails. The real



session was a form of validation of their responses. It is not surprising that the interviews went very smoothly and both the researcher and the respondents appeared to be on the same footing. The responses from the earlier email had helped the researcher to refine the questions already. The researcher had named this process of sending the interview questions ahead of the KII and getting responses, “extended interview”. In doing this, the researcher has learned from Gunter (2000) where the tactic of administering questionnaires to participants prior to group sessions is called an “extended focus group”. He recognises two uses of this approach: it allows the participants to develop a commitment to a position before any group discussion begins, as well as ensuring that the moderator draws out minority opinions and more dominant, majority ones (2000, p. 43). In the case of this study, it has helped the researcher sharpen the interview questions as well as test out the responses earlier provided as it authenticates further the responses from the Managers during KII.

The next subsection discusses the method of data collection for the FGD, highlighting approaches through which the researcher was able to generate insights and answer the study’s questions.

#### Section 4.5.2 Focus Group Discussion Procedure

The researcher employed three research assistants to assist in conducting the FGD with the discussants at different FGD locations. Each of these research assistants held at least a master’s degree with an appreciable level of experience in data collection. The FGD sessions were conducted face-to-face at a convenient eatery

venue closest to each newspaper newsstand at the aforementioned strategic junctions (see subsection 4.4.2) within the capital cities of the selected states. Usually, Nigerian newspaper newsstands are found in areas with fast-flowing vehicular traffic and crowded streets; various parks, offices and eateries are often situated nearby. Therefore, given that the researcher extended a lunch treat as an incentive (details are encapsulated under ‘incentive during research’ below) to the willing discussants, the venue for all of the sessions was an eatery, where a roundtable setting was also secured. A roundtable setting is viewed as ideal for an FGD session as it tends to enhance mutuality that helps the discussants to proceed freely with each other cooperation. Besides, the eatery provided a quieter and more relaxed setting away from the noisy and sometimes even chaotic environment of roadside newsstands. The sessions were held after the morning rush hour morning and early afternoons on weekdays when eateries are relatively quiet and more conducive for such an exercise as against evenings or weekends when the environment is usually busier and noisier. This was ideal - a non-threatening and non-bureaucratic setting, combined with a homely atmosphere. Ultimately, the strategic positioning and relevance of these selected junctions made them suitable to be selected, sampled and visited for the newspaper readers’ FGD.

#### Incentive during research:

As cited by Boughton (2016), The Market Research Society describes an incentive as “any benefit offered to respondents to encourage participation in a project.” In this view, incentive is considered a valuable tool for helping to maximize research participation since there is greater value to the individual for taking part. However,

the author had advised on following relevant guidelines and ensuring that care and consideration are taken over the choice of incentive to avoid over-spending research budget, risk allegations of bribery or influence respondents' views. This indicates concern among scholars that incentivizing respondents can skew research data.

However, studies such as Boughton (2016) and Brown (2016) show that whilst incentive does increase response rates, it does not actually affect response quality. Moreover, more facts on incentives are required to appreciate their impact, as little attention has been given to defining what constitutes fair incentives and unjustifiable inducement. As data collection for FGD is in-depth and time-consuming, the researcher considered offering discussants a "reasonable and proportionate" incentive in the form of a lunch. This was balanced to represent the time and effort that the discussants spent on the project. Besides, recruitment of the discussants was becoming a challenge because the researcher had no pre-arranged meeting or appointment with them. Most of the people met had an already designed schedule for the day which some had to give up to hold the FGD session with the researcher. The incentive was offered at the end of the session after data had successfully been collected.

For ethical considerations, the researcher obtained written consent from the participants with the promise of confidentiality. The researcher also ensured that the incentives were not construed as a bribe but a tool for expressing gratitude for time and effort towards the study. Some participants were probably motivated by

the chance to have lunch (a service offered to all participants), and it is possible that others were driven by mere interest in the project. Whatever it was, the FGDs turned out to be lively discussions. Similar to the KII approach and for reasons noted under subsection 4.8.1, each session lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. A record of the sessions was created in the form of tape-recording and note taking.

The key research limitation here was the inability of the researcher to conduct a pilot session before carrying out the FGD session. As previously mentioned, the pilot study is necessary most times to sharpen the skills of the researcher. Nevertheless, the fact that the focus group discussions were held on different days provided the opportunity for the researcher to learn and improve his skills, as each FGD was an improvement on the other. Again, random and purposive choice of participants provided the opportunity to generate rich and reliable data from the discussants. Put differently, the random selection and engagement of the newspaper readers at the selected newsstands provided the opportunity of assembling authentic views of participants, as whatever they said in the first instance could arguably be considered to be close to the true position of their perception. This is because there was no opportunity for them to have a purview into the content of the designed research instrument - a situation that could possibly allow them time to compose and offer responses which they thought might please the researcher.

Termed 'social desirability bias', Grimm (2010) recognizes the tendency of research participants to give socially desirable responses instead of choosing responses that are reflective of their true feelings. Studies such as King and Brunner (2000, p.81)

and Huang et al. (1998) further indicate that during interviews, some research participants tend to present a favourable response away from reality (self-deception), or may 'fake good' to conform to socially acceptable values, avoid criticism, or gain social approval. Moreover, some respondents could make statements based on dominating popular opinion or to avoid being considered incorrect or naïve among participants of a group. It also stops some discussants from freely expressing their views. Nevertheless, socially desirable responses mostly occur when the scope of study involves socially sensitive questions on multi-disciplinary and multi-theoretical studies involving technology, management, economics, politics, religion and culture; or personal issues such as drug use, cheating, and smoking (Grimm, 2010).

Therefore, social desirability bias has become a major issue in the conduct of qualitative interview studies and it is advisable to incorporate socially desirable approaches to mitigate its effect on research data. For instance, the researcher needs to assure the respondents of confidentiality, anonymity and strictly academic use of the responses they would provide. Moreover, conducting research sessions in an informal and friendly manner will ensure the respondents are free and relaxed to provide responses. This study, in the attempt to generate truthful responses from participants, applied these approaches in each of the sessions in order to create an appropriate and friendly atmosphere that would mitigate the risk of socially desirable bias.

On commencement of the FGD/interview session, a brief explanation of the study's nature and the discussants' rights were stated. Each of the discussants (newspaper audiences) across the FGD clusters provided consent and was made aware of the fact that their participation in the FGD was entirely voluntary and that they were able to withdraw at any time. Discussants were neither compelled nor pressured to stay and attend the session. Therefore, this process attempted to create a cordial and informal setting for the discussants to freely express their personal views.

During the FGD sessions, the researcher had reasons to rephrase or simplify questions in areas where the discussants did not understand. Moreover, asking leading questions was avoided. As noted by Hammersley & Gomm (2008, p.100),

what people say in an interview will indeed be shaped, to some degree, by the questions they are asked, the conventions about what can be spoken about [...] by what time they think the interviewer wants; by what they believe he/she would approve or disapprove of.

The above quotation suggests that the FGD discussants will likely only provide what they are prepared to reveal based on their perceptions of the research-subject and opinions. However, these perceptions might be subjective and therefore can change over time according to circumstance. Such responses, thus, might be at a substantial distance from 'reality'. Arguably, this could serve as a limitation to the use of this method of data collection. Nevertheless, what the researcher did was to establish natural modes of interaction and understanding among participants (researcher and research assistants inclusive). For instance, the researcher related to members of the focus groups on their merit, as well as occasionally seeking

answers to support their preconceived notions. Hence, the researcher sought to boost the confidence of discussants so that they actively participated in the session. Moreover, the focus group discussants were offered the chance to sum up and clarify the points they had made. This enabled the study to generate answers that are more appropriate and, subsequently, data that are more accurate were arrived at. A record of the sessions was made in the form of tape-recording and note taking. These activities supported the reconstruction of what the discussants had said.

#### Section 4.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Overwhelming some researchers, qualitative interviews (KII and FGD inclusively) tend to generate large amounts of data (Neuman, 2007). As described by Dörnyei (2007), an hour-long interview may take up to six to seven hours to transcribe and generate around fifty pages of transcript. This assertion shares some similarities with the researcher's experience during data analysis. Suffice it to note that the analysis process of this study was reflexive, and included the researcher's interactional experience with interviews. Therefore, this section discusses the approach adopted in analysing data generated from the mixed research design.

In analysing the transcripts from KII, as well as Focus Group Discussions FGDs, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis method. This, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), is "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes data set in (rich) detail. However, it also often goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the

research topic” (p.6). This kind of qualitative analysis is preferred given its flexibility and open-endedness; it is not tied to any particular theoretical or epistemological perspective and so makes for an eclectic approach in data reading and analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) elaborate:

[...] Thematic analysis is not wed to any pre-existing theoretical framework, and so it can be used within different theoretical frameworks..., and can be used to do different things within them. Thematic analysis can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants, or it can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society. It can also be a “contextualist” method, sitting between the two poles of essentialism and constructionism, and characterised by theories such as critical realism..., which acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of “reality”. Therefore, thematic analysis can be a method, which works both to reflect reality, and to unpick or unravel the surface of “reality” (p.9).

Ultimately, the first step in the analysis process was critical reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts. This research activity did not only elicit the strategic and majority opinions but demonstrated a diversity of views extracted from the KII and FGD, while recognizing that these would be public discourses. Thus, the researcher was able to observe and isolate relevant themes. The four themes and components isolated through these interview responses were: content management, human resource development, revenue and prospects. These were used as sub-heads under which the analysis was conducted. The themes and components were chosen based on their relatedness to the study objectives (see

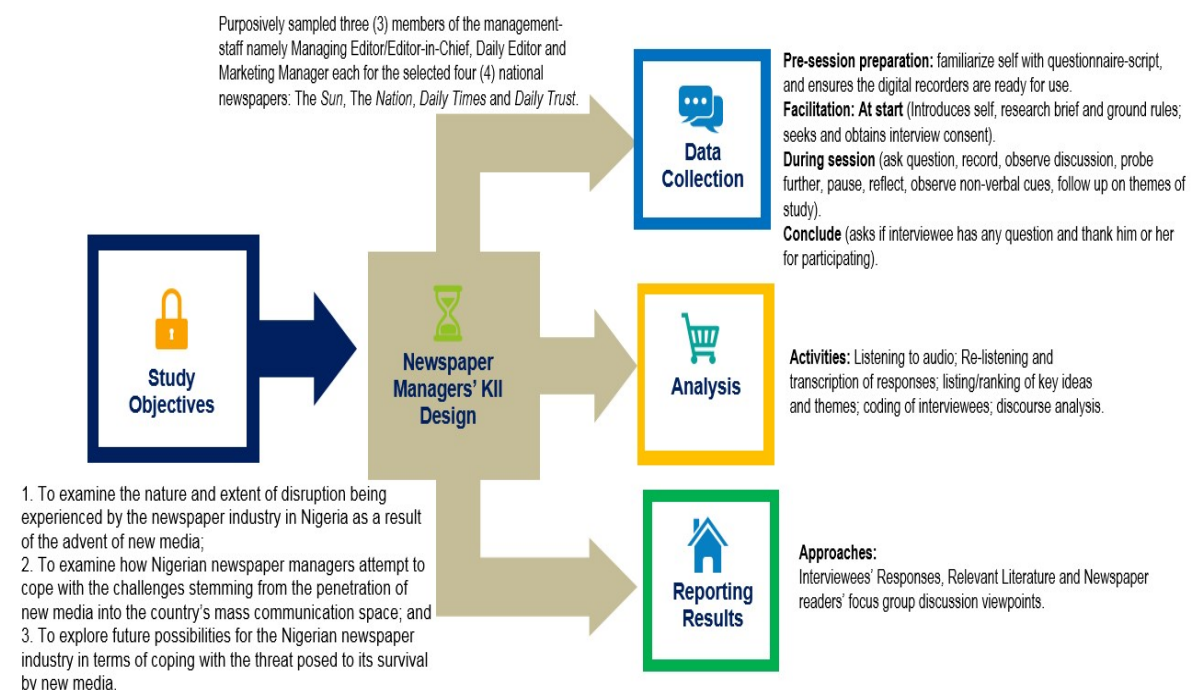


section 1.3) as well as their dominance in the interview data corpus. This is in line with the philosophy and procedure of the thematic method of data analysis as captured above by Braun & Clarke (2006). Moreover, the sphere of this research is multi-disciplinary and multi-theoretical encompassing technology, management, economics, politics and culture. Therefore, a particularly flexible and multi-dimensional approach such as thematic method was preferred for data analysis.

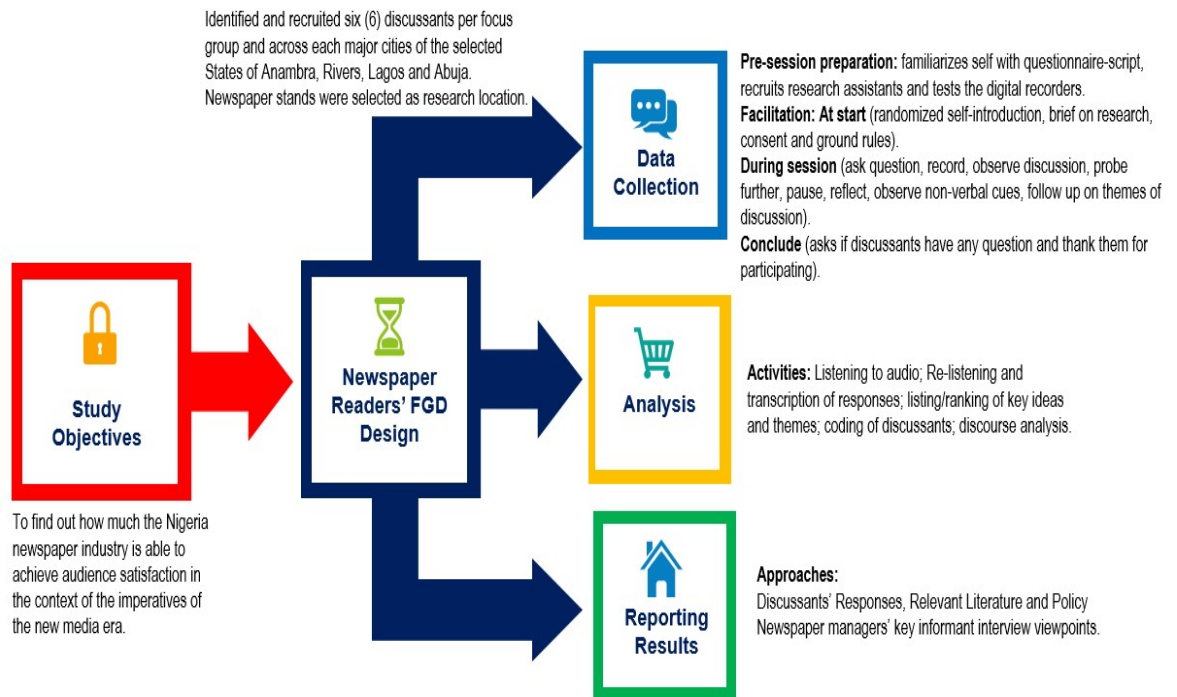
However, there exists a difference in the approach the study adopted in analysing data from the KII and FGD design. While respondents' titles (newspapers' managers) were mentioned for the KII, discussants in FGDs were not named in strict compliance with the consent charter. Therefore, in the analysis chapter, where exact quotation needs to be made for emphasis and insights, the designation of the responding manager and name of the newspaper were indicated (see chapter 5). The identities of the discussants were coded as "Discussant 1", "Discussant 2", "Discussant 3" etc. In other words, where discussants' responses needed to be quoted for remarkable and 'invaluable interpretations' (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000; p.160) to the phenomena being investigated, the allocated code number was used. This provided anonymity to the focus group discussants. This approach to data analysis provided the study with the framework through which it arrived at findings (see section 5.2) that addressed the significances of this study (see section 1.5). Among others, the findings generate insights that readily guide media players, investors and governments in discussions around policy decisions aimed at creating content for Nigerian hardcopy newspaper and new media audience. It also serves as a stepping stone for further academic inquiry.

This study analysis considered generated data in diverse contexts - not as 'wrong or right', 'accurate or inaccurate', but as products of contexts under which the individual participants made submissions. Finally, this research exercise was generally time-consuming and resources-demanding with regard to both data collection and analysis because they were transcribed, coded, translated (or quoted) and interpreted.

Designed and put forward by the study, the diagrams below summarise the KII and FGD technique steps undertaken by the researcher in line with the study's objectives in an attempt to answer the research questions.



**Figure 12:** Summary flow chart of the steps undertaken by researcher for the newspaper managers' KII technique (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).



**Figure 13:** Summary flow chart of the steps undertaken by researcher for the newspaper readers' FGD technique (Nelson Omenugha PhD Thesis, 2019).

#### Section 4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has given an overview of the research methodology used in this study. A mixed qualitative method had been chosen in order to examine the challenges of new media technology on the management of Nigerian Newspapers. In the context of the present research project, the researcher used two key methods in the data collection process, KII and FGD. The researcher conducted the KII with the newspaper organization's manager - specifically the MD/E-in-C, DE & MM in order to generate insights into the situation of their newspaper organization management. In addition, the researcher conducted an FGD with the readers (audience) of the newspapers - specifically the Free Readers Association at various newsstands across cities, to ascertain how the Nigerian newspapers have been able

to achieve audience satisfaction in the context of the new media environment. This research approach offers a top-down and bottom-up insight into the phenomena under study. The next chapter provides detailed accounts of the data generated, as well as offering their analysis and interpretation.

## Chapter 5 Data Presentation, Analysis and Results

This chapter offers descriptive and interpretative treatment of the data gathered from the field by the researcher, towards realising the research objectives. The chapter shows various experiences of the managers (the Managing Director (MD)/Editor-in-Chief (E-in-C), Marketing Manager (MM)/Business Manager, and Daily Editor (DE)/ Corporate Manager) of Nigerian newspapers – specifically, *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *The Daily Trust* and *The Daily Times* - vis-à-vis the challenges the new media technologies pose for the management of their respective newspaper organization. It also reflects the perceptions of Nigerian newspaper audiences (readers) on how Nigerian newspapers have been able to achieve audience satisfaction in the context of the new media environment. Within this chapter, the researcher explores existing technological trends, coping strategies, overlaps and possibilities for the Nigerian Newspaper Industry. This chapter also examines the technological challenges for the essential themes and components of newspaper management, namely, content management, human resource management, revenue management and prospect management by demonstrating how the data generated and findings link management to key ideas from TD and DT theories (see section 3.6).

This chapter has two broad sections - one, data presentation, analysis and interpretation and two, the summary of the findings. Each of the sections provides insight and interrogates the fieldwork data generated from the selected Nigerian newspaper managers on the challenges of new media technologies on the

management of their respective newspaper organization. It also captures responses from the Nigerian newspaper audiences in an attempt to explore to what extent the Nigerian newspapers have been able to achieve audience satisfaction in the context of the new media environment. In conducting the analysis and interpretation, the study interrogates and discusses data from both the TD and DT perspectives, while establishing a nexus with the Techno-human Dynamism construct.

As earlier noted in the methodology chapter (chapter 4), the data was gathered using a mixed qualitative interview method - specifically, the manager KII and newspaper reader (audience) FGD. Therefore, the first section of this chapter is divided into four subsections, namely: content management, human resource development, revenue and prospects. Hence, the section offers discourse on content management and considers how content (editorial thrust) of the newspapers is harnessed and challenged by the new media technologies. It also focuses on human resource development and management and discusses how new media technologies have evolved the skills and everyday activities of the newspaper workers. The discourse on Revenue Management attempts to examine the technological challenge for the economies of the newspaper organization within the context of readership, patronage and circulation of the newspaper. Finally, this section offers discourse on the prospects of the Nigerian traditional newspaper. It thus engages various projections and the future of hardcopy newspaper in the country against the background of the competition and impact of the new media technologies. The second section offers a summary of the data's findings. The

section provides a data analysis and interpretation related to the everyday newspaper management and key findings.

### Section 5.1 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Two sets of data were involved here: Key Informant Interview (KII) data and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) data. The KII data were generated from three management personnel from each of the four newspapers under study namely: *The Sun*, *The Nation*, *Daily Times* and *Daily Trust*. These personnel were as follows:

- (i) The Managing Director/Editor-in-Chief who is the overall administrative and editorial head of the newspaper,
- (ii) Daily Editor (a title used in Nigeria for the editor of the daily as against weekend edition of newspapers; he or she is considered the number one editor) or Corporate Affairs Director (as witnessed in *Daily Trust* Newspaper Organization and who is equally a high ranking manager) overseeing the editorial activities, and
- (iii) Marketing Manager or Business Development Manager (as witnessed in *The Sun* Newspaper) who runs the day-to-day activities of the revenue section.

The researcher considered these officers as competent to offer the information needed in the study because they occupy key positions in the editorial, revenue and administrative domains of their respective establishments. Stated differently, they are important sources for gaining information regarding how

the newspapers have responded to the new media challenge in the key areas of content management (editorial), revenue (circulation and advertising) and administration (employee development and hardcopy future prospects). Thus, the following officers were interviewed in each of the newspapers:

Newspaper	Officer	Designation
<i>Daily Times</i>	Bonaventure Melah	Managing Editor/Editor-in-Chief
	Sam Nzeh	Daily Editor
	Gbenga Adeosun	Marketing and Sales Manager
<i>Daily Trust</i>	Manir Dan Ali	Chief Executive Officer/Managing Editor-in-Chief
	Shuaib Nma Imam	Director, Corporate Affairs/Editor, Daily
	Yusuf Juda	Marketing Manager
<i>The Nation</i>	Victor Ifijeh	MD/Editor-in-Chief
	Gbenga Omotosho	Daily Editor
	Lekan Otufodunrin	Editor, Daily Online/Marketing Manager
<i>The Sun</i>	Eric Osagie	MD/Editor-in-Chief
	Onuoha Ukeh	Daily Editor
	Nkiru Obeki	Business Development Manager

**Table 2:** Key Informant Interview (KII) Respondents.

Incidentally, only *The Sun* Business Development Manager was a woman among the above interviewees. This reflects the enduring male dominance of the management structure in the Nigerian media industry, a situation that has continuously attracted the interest of scholars and other stakeholders interested in closing what is seen as



the gender gap in local communication power (Anyanwu, 2001b; Asong & Batta, 2011).

The study by Asong and Batta (2011) probed gender representation in communication education and practice in Nigeria. The scholars found that women were under-represented in the five key communication professional bodies in the country, viz - the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) and Advertising Practitioners' Council of Nigeria (APCON). Out of the total members of these bodies, 23, 444 (67.23%) were men while 11, 428 (32.77%) were women. Breaking the figures down further, it was found that women constituted 32% of the NUJ membership as against 68% for men. For the NGE, women accounted for a mere 22.16% as against 77.84% male membership. Similarly, women made up only 40% of the membership of the NIPR as against men who claimed 60% of the membership. The NPAN had the worst scenario where only three (3) women, representing 11.11%, featured as owners of print media in the country as against 24 male owners representing 88.81%. Finally, for APCON, women made up 17.46% of the membership as against men's 82.54%. All this is in spite of the fact that females constitute a majority (60.09%) of the students studying communication-related disciplines across 28 universities surveyed. Citing a survey by the Independent Journalism Centre (IJC), Lagos in conjunction with the Panos Institute of Washington and the Centre for War, Peace and the News Media of New York, Anyanwu (2001b) notes that "the local media has been dominated by men, a situation that persists" and "impacts coverage of news

[...]” (p.11). Eze (2017) observes that in the last 10 years, only one female has functioned as a title editor of any of the major national dailies in the country - Funke Egbemode who was the editor of *Daily Independent* and later *Sunday Sun*.

Even though the focus of this thesis is not on gender, the gendered management structure of the Nigerian newspapers could affect the kind of knowledge produced. Scholars such as Skeggs (1995) have argued that different ways of knowing (epistemology) are inextricably linked to our various identities. Skeggs (1995) makes it clear that ‘the ontological recognitions of our raced, gendered and classed existence are linked to wider debates about epistemology and about what knowledge actually is’ (p. 14). Put this way, the dominance of men in the management structure of the newspapers becomes significant in knowledge production. The details of the data collection method have earlier been encapsulated in subsection 4.8.1 of this thesis.

Similarly, male dominance in the newspaper structure is also seen in the readers used for the focus group discussion. Data from these readers were intended to serve in probing the extent to which the managerial responses of the Nigerian newspapers to the new media challenge may have yielded positive results. This is because readers are the ultimate consumers whom the newspapers are seeking to satisfy in order to remain relevant in the market. Hence, the degree of such satisfaction will crucially influence revenue success. The demographic characteristics of the discussants are as shown below.

Demographics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	24	100%
	Female	0	0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>
Age	18 – 29	6	25%
	30 – 39	8	33.3%
	40 – 49	7	29.2%
	50 and above	3	12.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>
Education	Senior School Certificate	9	37.5%
	Diploma	4	16.7%
	Degrees	7	29.2%
	Higher degrees	4	16.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>
Occupation	Civil servants	7	29.2%
	Businessmen	5	20.8%
	Commercial driver	1	4.2%
	Accountant	1	4.2%
	Teacher	1	4.2%
	Hotel worker	1	4.2%
	Traders	3	12.5%
	Artisans	3	12.5%
	Students	2	8.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3:** Demographics of the FGD Respondents.

Interestingly, the gender make-up is only male, a reflection of the fact that men constitute close to 100% of newspaper readers in the country as established by several studies (such as Alamu, 2010; Edegoh, Ezeh & Aniebo, 2015; Nkemdilim, 2015; and Layefa *et al.*, 2016). Edegoh *et al.* (2015) found that only 1.2% of the women among 480 sampled respondents admitted to reading newspapers. Similarly, a study by Layefa *et al.* (2016) found that no females among the sampled respondents read newspapers regularly. Thus, it is not surprising that not a single female was sighted by the researcher at all the newsstands visited across the country. Perhaps mitigating against women being seen at newsstands may be the fact that it is culturally unacceptable for a woman to be seen 'idling' along with men in an open and free space.

Ultimately, in analysing the above two sets of data - KII and FGD - the first step was critical reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts to enable the researcher to observe and isolate relevant themes and components. These steps are in line with the thematic method of data analysis. As observed by Braun and Clarke (2006), such themes and components are necessarily a product of a researcher's deliberate and critical decisions, as against the misconception that they merely "emerge" in the process of analysis.

In this study, relevance of themes and components was determined by considering two important factors. First, the study objectives which such themes and components must be able to address; the themes and components ought to serve as signposts for the research destination. Secondly, with regard to the theoretical

foundation of the study, the themes and components ought to be related to this. These two considerations, however, converge at one point – the extant literature on the subject of study. The study objectives proceeded from the current discourses in literature regarding new media's influence on the old media, while the theory forms part of this literature in the broadest sense. As such, four (4) themes and components were isolated from the interview responses - namely: content management, human resource development, revenue and prospects. These arguably constitute the concern of scholars and stakeholders regarding what becomes of traditional media in the face of new media's disruptive effect; in other words, they are concerned with the effect on content, expertise, revenue and survival of these older media (see the literature chapter 3). Thus, these themes became the sub-heads under which the analysis was completed. Furthermore, in carrying out analysis under these themes and components, the researcher importantly paid attention to those points which the interviewees appeared to lay emphasis on. Such emphasis is often an indication of how much importance a respondent attaches to a point and thus possible evidence of its significance (Kumar, 1989). The FGD analysis also came under these four themes and components, while this second category of data only served as a complement to the KII data.

Against the above discourse, the proceeding subsections engage and interrogate data (interview responses) under these themes and components.

### Section 5.1.1 Content Management

Content is a key area where new media technologies have critically affected traditional media. These technologies have introduced new dynamics in content in terms of quantity, format, flow orientation (vertical versus horizontal) and reach (Duarte, 2009; John, 2009; McQuail, 2010; Fill, 2011). Responses by the interviewees clearly point to the fact that new media technologies have had such an impact on their processes of content management, introducing new dynamics, which in turn offer challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities then necessitate some response.

The respondents were particular about the impact of new media technologies on the speed of content delivery, the rapidity with which information spreads among the public, which entails a new reality for traditional newspapers. For instance, the *Daily Trust* Editor describes new media as “a very big challenge for newspapers these days” in terms of business. He further notes that, “If you are not equal to the task, before your newspaper hits the newsstands in the morning, the day’s news is already everywhere.” Another way to view this submission is that what would have been the “day’s news” has become “yesterday’s news” as a result of the new standard that practically ensures increasing perishability of news. The Managing Director of *Daily Times* agreed that, “Time was when all stories were collected through the day and reported the following day in the papers”, but that newspapers today no longer have that luxury of waiting until the next day to publish, given that the news somehow reaches the public as soon as the event occurs. Put differently,

there is an added pressure of time on newspaper establishments in managing content. Similarly, the Editor of the *Daily Sun* reflects on this reality thus:

[...] The Internet has enhanced immediacy. When there is breaking news, while the hardcopy to be read tomorrow is being prepared, the online version breaks it. So people would know what happens. [...] This is the negative side. So, breaking news is no longer in the hardcopy unless when it is exclusive. But when it is a running story, if you don't handle it well, it becomes stale tomorrow. It also affects readership because some readers would say 'if I read it yesterday why buying a copy?'

The above responses suggest that newspaper managers have come to appreciate the fact that the idea of news is being redefined in terms of timeliness and perishability. Scholars like McQuail (2010), Williams (2016) and Eze (2017) have argued that news has assumed a higher perishability in view of the information consumption pattern created by the advent of new media. Such heightened perishability means that the audience is increasingly more demanding and insatiable in terms of content freshness. To satisfy this audience, media houses must explore ways to remain relevant.

But in what ways are the Nigerian newspapers responding to this new reality? Generally, the responses indicate that the newspapers are adopting the strategy of using technology to solve a "technological" challenge. *The Nation* Daily Editor, in this respect, submitted that his medium now prioritises online delivery of content:

[...] We even have an online first policy which means that for every reporter in this organization, when a story breaks and it's a routine story it has to get to the online department first. We are very conscious of the importance of the new media and the need to respond as fast as we should.

The Managing Director of *Daily Times* made a similar submission:

Today, the news breaks on the go and you find that many of the print media organisations, including *Daily Times*, have had to create digital platforms. This (means) we are more responsive in bringing the news as it breaks.

The *Daily Trust* Editor agreed with the foregoing, observing that news can now be served in minute by minute updates:

In the area of newsgathering, you don't need to have the journalist in the office before they can submit their report. With the introduction of the Internet, they are able to file in their reports from wherever they are. Sometimes, they do give us updates from the field, they do not need to come to the office to do that. Without the Internet, this wouldn't have been possible.

Most of the interviewees mentioned online delivery of content as a strategy adopted by their establishment in trying to cope with the reality of faster perishability. But then this does not exactly explain what happens to the hardcopy. Will it remain competitive in the face of increasing demand for speed in content delivery? The responses of the interviewees point to their attempts at new strategies to retain the relevance of the hardcopy. One of the strategies is making the hardcopy more detailed. The Editor of the *Daily Sun* admitted that because people have read the breaking news in the online version, "it puts you under pressure to make what you would publish in the hardcopy tomorrow much more detailed." Such greater depth is a way of keeping the hardcopy attractive, irrespective of its on-time shortcomings. The *Daily Trust* Marketing Manager says:

[...] We make sure that we have just summaries of write-ups (in our online version), and if you want the full details of the



write-ups, you have to make reference to the hardcopy or you buy the e-copy. When you log on to the website, you will see the snippets of all available news but you cannot see the entire paper. If you want the whole story, you have to subscribe to the e-copy or the hardcopy.

The foregoing represents what Nigerian journalist and newspaper manager, Stanley Egbochukwu describes as the “only way the hardcopy newspaper can remain relevant in the face of growing culture of citizen journalism aided by the Internet and social media” (2013, p.11). However, while newspapers may have adopted this strategy, it remains to be seen how effective it may have been in retaining hardcopy readership. Some responses from the focus group discussion sessions are illuminating in this regard. Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) say:

In Nigeria today, you will see that there are some newspapers that have strong online presence [sic]. You talk about *Daily Trust*, *The Sun*, *Vanguard* and all that. The problem sometimes is that you may see an interesting story, they will give just one or two paragraphs and write “details later”. The details will be in their hardcopy the next morning. But normally, they ought to give the full details online so that readers who may not have the privilege of accessing the hardcopies can read and get details of the news... Sometimes due to the economic implications, I don’t (go for hardcopy). I just make do with what I see online.

Discussant 8 (Awka, December 22, 2018) says:

[...] You see newspapers write short stories about breaking news ... and you see “details later”. Yes, details might not come later, but you have at least got the information, and it makes you aware of such news, as such you can wait for the hardcopy the following day to read the full details of the news at newspaper stands.

In a similar vein, Discussant 15 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) said:

Reading online gives you breaking news before you get to the hardcopy. Online I look at headlines. But hardcopy I read in details. Data involvement is my handicap.

Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) further stated:

[...] I read newspapers to get informed (but) most times, I don't read details, I look at the headlines. But sometimes, political stories, I like to read the details. I do that on daily basis, sometimes I read hardcopies. Sometimes I read the online version.

The foregoing tends to suggest that the strategy of not giving all details of a report may be a profitable one for Nigerian newspapers in their quest to retain hardcopy patronage in the new media era. First, the responses indicate that the interviewees, as readers, do sometimes feel a need to read the hardcopy – a need created by the newspapers' tactic of excluding details in their online versions and taking them to the hardcopy.

However, it appears that the mere presence of this need would not automatically guarantee that the reader will go for the hardcopy, as other variables like cost could be a hindrance as evident from the response of Discussant 10. This conclusion is supported by findings in the studies by Alamu (2010), Nkemdilim (2015), and Layefa, Johnson and Taiwo (2016) indicating poverty as an important factor hindering newspaper reading in the country. While one needs to part with at least 200 hundred naira (52 cents) to be able to own a copy of newspaper, as low as 100 naira (26 cents) worth of data can serve for reading several newspaper titles even for more than a day, in addition to serving other online purposes. This underlines the comparative advantage of online reading, other things being equal, over

hardcopy purchase. Notwithstanding that the discussants could read hardcopies free of charge at newsstands, they still appreciated the advantage of owning a copy which one could settle to read at one's convenience and in more details; a privilege hardly offered by newsstands. However, the cost implication of this dissuades some of them from always taken this option. Most of the discussants felt that purchasing hardcopies is less cost effective. For example, Discussant 4 said "online reading is cheaper. If I buy data, I use it to read newspapers and also do other things such as visiting Facebook, Instagram and checking mail" (Wuse, Abuja, January 14). Furthermore, reading habits appear also to be a factor as per the response of Discussants 2 and 12, for instance, who noted that he is more interested in headlines and does not read details, meaning that the strategy of reserving details of reports for the hardcopy might be negatively affected here. Studies (such as Edegoh, Ezeh & Aniebo, 2015; Nkemdilim, 2015) have shown that this attitude to news consumption is becoming the habit of many young Nigerians, who may consequently not bother going for detailed reports reserved for hardcopies. Incidentally, such young consumers were amply represented in this study, as close to 60% of the discussants were below 40 years of age (see Table 3). Internet use demographic data in Nigeria also indicate that this group is the most Internet-active (NCC, 2018). This reinforces the argument that the future of newspapers in the country has a lot to do with how much they embrace online content distribution, particularly considering the fact that over one-third of Nigeria's population are below 40 years (National Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Also, considering that these discussants are individuals who usually have free access to newspapers by going to read at newsstands, their statement that they go for hardcopies after seeing headlines online may not exactly translate into their actually buying a newspaper, which is what the newspapers target through such a strategy. However, a sample of the dominant answers for questions about their newspaper reading/buying habits are illuminating in this regard. Discussant 1 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) simply replied, “I buy newspaper every day, one or two copies – hardcopy.” On the other hand, Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) offered: “[...] I don’t buy newspapers regularly, I buy once in a while, particularly when I have something to do with that very newspaper edition. Usually, I just go to newsstands, read and go away.” These two statements reflect the general pattern of responses among the respondents: they generally patronise newspapers but some are regular buyers and others are not. In other words, the discussants are not just readers but also buyers, though the regularity of purchase varies from person to person. If they are buyers, then it is likely that when the online version has omitted details, they will actually buy the hardcopies – at least in some cases. Nonetheless, a few of the discussants noted that they did not purchase hardcopies at all. For instance, Discussant 14 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) admitted:

I read newspaper once a week but I don’t buy. I read mostly on the Internet. I only read hardcopies once a week mostly on weekends when I come to newsstands. I don’t purchase newspaper copies.

Discussant 21 (Ikeja, January 22, 2019) offered:

I don’t buy newspaper but since I do my business around here (the newspaper stand), I just come around [to] read sports newspapers. I don’t buy since I am close to the seller.

If I see the headline and like it, I will read mostly if it is about sports.

On the whole, therefore, there are both buyers and non-buyers among these newspaper readers - both shaped by various factors such as finance, style of reading (many are headline readers), search for details, etc. Against the foregoing, it may be safe to state that the strategy of excluding details from some of the reports published online may have yielded some fruit for the newspapers. The submission by Discussant 2 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) makes a direct statement in this regard:

Sometimes, what makes me to buy newspaper is if there is news I want to read that is not online. If not, most times I read online and I am okay. So online readership of newspaper has really helped in slowing down the sale of hardcopy newspaper.

Content distribution (audience reach) is another area which the newspaper managers saw as having been impacted by new media. They agreed that new media platforms have offered them new opportunities to reach more audiences and in a more flexible and dynamic way. *The Nation* MD admitted this when he stated that new media has helped them “expand” their “brand and... products” as they now present their content in print as well as online via their website and social media platforms. It has also helped them a global brand “because people can read us from anywhere in the world.”

The *Daily Times* Editor, while concurring with the above submission, added, “With respect to readership, I can add that as well, it has become more diversified.” Hence, in the new era, the newspapers are seeing a great opportunity to transcend

their immediate geographical space and position their products as real global brands.

Nonetheless, it would also be true that mere posting of content online does not necessarily guarantee readers' patronage. Stated differently, the fact that newspapers maintain an online presence may not always translate to the audience reading such online copies. Hence, it becomes pertinent to know the readers' disposition to online reading. Do they see it as offering something extra? Any advantage vis-à-vis the hardcopy? Responses from focus group discussants suggest they have reasons to read the online copy. These reasons include its immediacy, convenience, brevity, proximity, and cheapness – which arguably constitute some of the key strengths of online news delivery (Abaji, 2009; John, 2009; McQuail, 2010; Fill, 2011; Salman, Ibrahim, Hj. Abdullah, Mustaffa & Mahbob, 2011). This perception of advantage is a pointer to the likelihood of the correctness of the claim by the newspaper managers that their ability to now publish online has given their content wider visibility. In other words, the fact that the readers perceive online newspapers as desirable by way of offering some benefits vis-à-vis the hardcopy makes it likely that the newspapers may be making up for their losses in hardcopy readership – by virtue of their adopting the Internet technology for content dissemination. Deploying of mobile applications by the newspapers is intended to further make their content more conveniently accessible to readers. This was the submission of the respondents generally. This measure must have been in response to the reality that mobile phone remains the dominant channel of access to the Internet in Nigeria. In fact, it was the advent of GSM lines in the country that

brought about the rapid Internet penetration (NCC, 2018). A check by the researcher shows that four of the newspapers under study have their mobile apps available on Google Play Store and Apple Store. Notwithstanding, a few of the respondents have some misgivings about the actual desirability of Internet newspapers as will be seen later in the course of this analysis.

Mode of presentation of content also emerges as another area of impact of new media on newspaper content management as revealed by the interviewees. One of the most exciting features of new media is their flexibility in terms of offering content in diverse formats such as text, picture, sound and video (Duarte, 2009; Smith, 2009). Referring to how this has affected their operations, *The Nation* Editor stated:

We are expanding our offerings and we now produce videos and so many other things. We are very active on social media. [...] We are now more of a multimedia company than a mono product company. People can read us on all these platforms.

In concurring with the above, the *Daily Times* MD noted that in their content delivery effort, they are more particular about “technology savvy” people “that rely on the internet for their news instead of just papers.” In other words, they are obliged to move beyond paper presentation of content to electronic presentation with all the possibilities of formats – videos, audios, texts etc. The *Daily Sun* Editor also noted “We do news and we do interview and post the audio online. So you do not just read, you also listen.” Both *The Nation* Editor and *Daily Trust* Editor as well as its Managing Directors admitted that their newspapers have adopted this

practice. Arguably, while this strategy is definitely intended to make up for the losses in hardcopy sales, it does not really answer the question as to how to keep the hardcopy circulating in spite of the competition from online news sources. Rather, it is only an alternative revenue source whereby newspapers attempt to gain money through online advertising - thereby, possibly circumventing the losses entailed by decline in hardcopy sales.

On the other hand, by going beyond the print tradition and integrating multimedia content, the newspapers may be challenged as to whether they are actually working towards their survival or displacement. Even though this has become a global practice among newspapers, in the traditional sense, audio and video materials cannot be considered as newspaper content, and so a traditional newspaper that relies on them for survival may not be said to be exactly “surviving” as per its pure character as a *traditional newspaper*. However, it is also the case that earning more revenue through such multimedia content is also a way of keeping such a newspaper house strong enough to keep its hardcopy afloat. Thus, in this sense, the online multimedia content may be seen as complementing print and ensuring its survival.

Similarly, for the interviewees, the new media are also affecting their content management by way of greater audience involvement. *The Nation* Managing Director was more direct in articulating this:

In terms of success, I think we have done well in terms of being able to interface with the public. When they have information, they can get across to us so I think in terms of



our ability to interface with the public we have been really successful. Media has gone beyond just producing a copy or a radio show. It has gotten to a phase where it has become more interactive, where you need to engage with the readers, with the viewers and get their feedbacks and incorporate (them) in your content.

But then there may still be the question of how exactly such an interface with audience can actually help the survival of these newspapers. The responses appear to suggest that the managers view such as a way of retaining their readers' patronage and appreciating their preferences as a mean of improving their content. The *Daily Times* Editor averred that "we need to know who is reading us and their opinion about us, so that we can better serve them." While Nigerian newspapers do engage their readers via their websites and social media platforms, they also try to replicate this practice in the hardcopy by providing a column for citizen journalists to get published. Worthy of note is that such audience involvement was not conventional practice in the traditional newspaper. This is a necessity foisted upon the newspaper by the Internet culture – a necessity that impels the hardcopy to fight for survival by replicating what online news platforms do by way of reader involvement.

However, the FGD discussants largely admitted that they have not felt much disposed to access the online-based feedback channels of the newspapers by way of comments on content read. They have also failed to be involved in citizen journalism as far as the newspaper is concerned. The following comments are pertinent.

Discussant 4 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) said:

I rarely see the need to post comment whenever I read reports from newspapers. [...] I believe it is good that the newspapers keep giving us the opportunity to express ourselves.

Discussant 8 (Awka, December 22, 2018) stated:

I don't think I have ever got my comment published on newspaper website despite my efforts to write. I only get my comment published when I read materials and write on Facebook and WhatsApp, but certainly not on newspaper websites.

Discussant 18 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) noted:

Bad enough, just like my attitude towards hardcopy newspaper, I don't make comments when I read online. I also do not send my private reports for them to publish. But I feel it is important that I do that.

Looking at the above submissions, it is easy to see that the discussants' failure to access the feedback mechanism or engage in citizen journalism appears a matter of mere habit; they have no specific reasons for so doing. However, since the newspaper managers did not suggest that they experienced any paucity of readers' response/feedback, it may be the case that there are other readers out there accessing these feedback platforms. As *The Nation* MD put it "so I think in terms of our ability to interface with the public we have been really successful."

Apart from the opportunity to generate content from audience feedback, more importantly, newspapers now have the opportunity to generate content from diverse sources. According to *The Nation* Editor, new media technologies have

“made us to get more information than we used to have. [...] Journalists can now get information from different sources beyond press statement and all those things.”

*The Sun* Editor said:

We can now get a lot of information online as we create and package our content. Before now, journalistic research had been limited to use of physical library, I mean hardcopy sources, but today with the Internet, it is also done online. I think we now rely more on the Internet for such information sourcing, and it is far more efficient, faster and more convenient.

The *Daily Trust* Editor stated:

Yes, the online culture has improved journalism a lot in the aspect of getting information, statistics and other data that enrich your reports. One unique thing with the Internet is that you get updated data; data are updated frequently, sometimes in hourly or even minute basis.

The foregoing responses indicate an effort to enrich content by leveraging Internet sources. Mdlongwa (2009) and Williams (2016) observe that beyond the traditional means of content generation, media houses today can explore new media sources which generally offer greater diversity, flexibility and efficiency generally. However, the question may still be asked as to what manner of advantage this strategy (of using new media resources to enrich content) may confer on the hardcopy newspapers as they try to survive in the new media era. Does the tendency to prefer online newspapers stem from any observed deficiency in the quality of content i.e. information, facts and data found in the hardcopy? Answers from the FGD discussants as seen earlier, at least, indicate that this is not the case. The

discussants' reasons for preferring the online version mainly hinge on cost and convenience, the same reasons found in studies by Nkemdilim (2015) and Layefa, Johnson and Taiwo (2016). Be that as it may, it would not be out of place to assume that such enriched content may serve the strategic purpose of offering "more" to readers, irrespective of their existing satisfaction level, thereby gaining an edge in the midst of the enhanced competition for attention. This point will be revisited later.

Very importantly, embracing the new imperatives of content management as brought about by the new media era must have demanded re-equipping on the part of the newspapers. New technologies must replace old ones as testified to by *The Nation* Managing Director who contends that, "We also have to acquire new gadgets like we recently did by buying cameras and other recording gadgets for the online department." The Editor Daily Online of the newspaper also stated:

I think we are responding to the extent that so many years ago when we had an online department, it was just a unit of the IT department, but now that's changed. We now have a full online department that is separate from the IT department.

The Editor of *Daily Trust* also noted that his newspaper has now integrated an online section. The same admission was also made by *The Sun* MD and *Daily Times* MD. The implication of this is that online culture has become part of the operational architecture of these newspapers in their quest to hold their own in the face of the realities of the new media era. Thus, the content management culture in these

establishments will ideally be a fusion of the traditional newspapering process and new media content generation and processing techniques.

Importantly, while the newspaper managers appear bent on positively maximising new media platforms to remain competitive in the new dispensation, there is what seems like an inherent handicap on the part of online news platforms which these traditional newspapers seek to exploit. This handicap lies in the aspect of credibility, as online news platforms (including social media) are considered less trustworthy than traditional news sources by some readers. Basically, the former's lack of physical presence and many a time facelessness tend to be a source of suspicion (McQuail, 2010).

In Nigeria, the experience of online news sources repeatedly proving to be source of fake news has been quite telling. A notable case was that of October 11, 2017 when a piece of online news immediately went viral alleging that officers of the Nigerian Army were injecting schoolchildren with the Monkey pox virus in the name of immunisation; this was a piece of news that caused great public panic across the South-east states and encouraged many parents to rush to schools and pick up their children (Okachie, 2017; Umahi, 2017). Earlier, in 2014, in the wake of the Ebola virus epidemic in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa, an Internet message went viral, instructing people to bathe with warm water mixed with salt as a way of protecting themselves against the infection. Obukoadata and Abuah (2014) observe that despite the scientifically unfounded nature of the recommended remedy, one marvels at "the speed at which a significant segment of the population caught the

bug and to a reasonable extent acted in accordance to the prescribed antidote”, leading to the death of a number of hypertensive persons as a result of salt entering their body through skin pores (p.30).

The interviewees – even without the researcher asking any question to that effect – explicitly or implicitly referred to this credibility burden borne by Internet news as an opportunity to be explored by their medium in the face of the increased competition for patronage. According to *Daily Sun* Editor, there is a need for newspapers to look at their online version “and try to do things that will make it look more efficient... make sure the information you put out there is correct, that the quality is good. So we keep doing more.” Making a similar submission, the Business Development Manager of the newspaper related the following:

[...] There was a political campaign that was on and a rally was organized. All of a sudden they (online news platforms) came up with the news that a leader of a faction of the OPC (an ethnic-based organization) was killed and within five seconds it was all over the Internet. But the mainstream media decided to go for investigation to find out what happened really. We did our investigation and found out that there was really a clash between the APC and PDP (the two leading political parties in Nigeria) during the rally and the man was hit and he didn’t die. He was at the hospital and receiving treatment. As I speak to you now, he is hale and hearty. But the digital media have gone haywire that the man is dead. They publish fake news, they don’t do investigative journalism. They just give you breaking news which can get the whole country panicking. That proper media investigation is not there, no balancing. That is one area that is damaging. There was a house that was in dispute. We got it from the Internet that a husband died, the wife got the property sold, and the children came and a fight ensued which led to the house being burnt down. Before you knew it, the news was all over the place. Eventually we investigated, we got there, quite alright the

house was in dispute but it was not the house that got burnt. It was an unrelated fire incident.

The above submission reflects the efforts of a newspaper to distinguish itself by pursuing professionalism and credibility perceived as becoming more in demand as a result of the trust issues associated with online news sources. As can be seen from the above account, while online platforms may break the news, *The Sun* as a traditional newspaper seeking to gain acceptance through credibility, still goes on to do something extra – investigate and ascertain the exact truth in order to sustain the image of a credible brand.

The *Daily Trust* Editor made a similar argument:

One of the key things you need to do to remain afloat in the market is to ensure that you do not compromise on the principles of journalism. You need to ensure that the quality of news you publish is high and that the news is credible so that you can build the confidence of your reader... You need to dig for facts and cross-check them. All these help you stay afloat.

The *Daily Trust* Editor, in agreeing with this principle, gave an account of some of the exact steps taken by his newspaper to strengthen competitiveness through the pursuit of credibility:

Just like we say, *Daily Trust* is a newspaper that is built on trust. There are a number of things we put in place to retain our public trust. For instance, we have what is called whistle-blower programme. We also have “policy of no-thank-you” which prohibits our reporters from receiving gratifications from news sources. This is to ensure objectivity and credibility. This has helped us in publishing quality news that people can trust. We also have the policy of rewarding those staff members who have distinguished themselves in professionalism and character during our

annual Chairman's Merit Award. These are journalists who have rejected bribes, usually represented as "appreciation". We give them certificate of recognition and sometimes cash award and sometimes promotions. All these have helped us to retain a high quality. Secondly, we do a balanced reporting. We try to hear from all relevant sources before publishing. This has also built trust in the minds of our readers. We also ensure the quality of our news production.

A critical look at the above submission would show the determination of the print media managers to maintain ethical practices, to gain credibility and remain relevant. As shown earlier, to sustain readership, interpretative/investigative journalism is coveted, de-emphasising armchair reporting – an unethical practice in journalism. Here again, an unethical practice - reporting, coloured by gratification – is disparaged. Called the "brown envelope" syndrome in journalism parlance in Nigeria, gratification is the bane of journalism in the country. The name 'brown envelope' actually emerged from financial inducements hidden in brown envelopes and given to journalists, which motivate them to write a positive story or kill a negative story.

Another bane of journalism in the country is news commercialisation (see Omenugha and Oji, 2011). These have continued to generate multiple images of journalism and journalists before the Nigerian public. Rather than enjoying public trust and confidence, scepticism and uncertainty has dominated the Nigerian public sphere regarding journalists. Thus, scholars such as Omenugha and Oji (2011), Sparks (1999) have faulted Okunna's (2003, p.71) assertion that "journalism feeds on credibility". These scholars recognise that constraints of time, money, logistics, personnel, etc. continue to imply that journalists usually cut corners, not as a means



of meeting deadlines, but to make money. Writing about the British press, Sparks (1999) makes the following clear:

Newspapers in Britain are first and foremost businesses. They do not exist to report the news, to act as watchdogs for the public, to check on the doings of the government, to defend the ordinary citizens against abuses of power, to unearth scandals or do any of other fine and noble things that are sometimes claimed of the press. They exist to make money just as any other business does (p. 50).

It is thus interesting that this study throws up a contrary view that seems to disrupt the age-old belief that as businesses, newspapers may be unethical. For the newspaper managers that were in conversation with me, “credibility and ethics are highly prized”. This is evident from the structures put in place to encourage the desired behaviour and discourage the undesired ones. It would also appear that the perceived credibility shortcomings of Internet news sources only succeed in making credibility a more sought-after value, thereby creating a new atmosphere of credibility rivalry among traditional media, and between them and online media.

While the newspapers appear to be working hard to enthrone credibility in their reportage, the same cannot be said of the online news sources. Seen as an all-comers affair, and a free market of ideas, many see the non-credibility and inability to verify online news sources as great disadvantages which encourage fake news and heighten distrust. One may further argue that online sources (including social media) are exerting a “band wagon effect” as seen in the earlier cited examples of the Ebola virus salt and water therapy and the Army Monkey pox virus injection episodes. Will this mean that the assumed credibility advantage of traditional media

is not accurate? An argument that seems to answer this question is that the credibility advantage is a gradual process. “The hardcopy will survive. What is happening now is a phase. [...] Eventually, people will begin to distrust the online media. The print will survive in the long run because people are not getting exactly what they should get from the digital media,” said *The Sun* Business Development Manager. Victor Agusiobo, onetime Vice President of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, had couched this argument in the following way:

The social media will ultimately kill itself. People will soon get tired of fake information. Gullible people do not remain gullible forever. A lot of our people are gullible, yet as time goes on, with experience (including the disastrous ones like the Ebola water and salt therapy) and better understanding of the Internet, people will start becoming more circumspect about what they consume and believe. This will ultimately mean the gradual but inexorable rediscovery of traditional journalism and traditional media (Agusiobo, 2018, p.7).

A sample of the views of the FGD discussants gives some insight into how possibly the credibility factor may work to the advantage of traditional newspapers. Discussant 4 (Abuja, January 14, 2019) said that while he likes accessing news sources online and prefers it “because it is more convenient”, there was still the need to avoid “spreading fake news.” In other words, even if one relies on online news sources it should not be forgotten that not all online sources are reliable.

Discussant 19 (Ikeja, January 22, 2019) says:

I think the newspapers are there. They are doing fine. I think for every hardcopy you see today, you can get the full version online. I think the social media are making it difficult for the newspapers... but I think the newspapers are more credible.

Discussant 8 (Awka, December 22, 2018) noted:

[...] I don't like reading online. I prefer reading the print because I believe that there is a lot of fake news, lies and propaganda online. People can just come up to cook stories and post. When I go online and check for trending stories, I will now go to the print version to read it.

Asked whether his fear about inaccurate information online also extends to the online version of traditional (hardcopy) newspaper, he clarified:

Well, I could put my trust in them (traditional newspapers) when I go to their website. [...] But the information you get strictly on WhatsApp and FaceBook is porous and vulnerable to manipulation. If I am to go to the online version of *The Punch* and *Vanguard* (for instance), I would have to be confident that what I have is genuine.

However, Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) was still cautious on the reliability of accessing traditional media via online platforms:

My fear personally most times is fake news; there are some fake newspaper websites. For instance, you could have two *Vanguard* websites; one authentic and one fake, so you wouldn't know which one is which. Sometimes they may post fake news on one. So, it may be risky. In fact, we have once experienced this with *Vanguard* and the newspaper came out to disclaim the cloned website.

Discussant 9 (Awka, December 22, 2018), nonetheless, had a different opinion:

I don't agree because there is what you call domain name and you cannot have two domain names. Once you are sure of the domain name of the particular newspaper you want to read, you wouldn't run the risk of reading fake news.

Whatever may be the case, these responses suggest a greater degree of trust in the content of traditional newspapers compared with online sources. Whether a reader

would be confident to read such traditional newspapers via their websites or stick only to their hardcopies, is arguably still to the advantage of such traditional papers that their content is preferred.

On the whole, the foregoing analysis indicates that as far as content management is concerned, newspapers in Nigeria are trying to leverage new media technologies to respond to the changing terrain of competition. Such a response hinges on harnessing the respective strengths of the hardcopy and the softcopy while trying to use these to ameliorate their respective weaknesses. Thus, content management is a hybrid process - synergising the fastness, efficiency and multimedia richness of the Internet with the traditional journalistic values (such as accuracy, depth and credibility) associated with the hardcopy.

Designed and put forward by the study, Table 4 below shows a summary of the points that emerged from the analysis under the theme and component of 'content management' of the newspaper. It highlights core identified opportunities and challenges which the new media technologies represent for Nigerian newspaper managers in the area of content management, as well as their responses.

Implications	Details
Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Speedy delivery of content</li> <li>2. More sources of content</li> <li>3. Diverse content formats</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Flexibility</li> <li>5. Audience relationship</li> <li>6. Credibility advantage</li> <li>7. Information/Investigation advantage</li> </ol>
Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Need for replacement of old media tools with new media tools</li> <li>2. Need for new gatekeeping set-up</li> <li>3. Need for new gatekeeping skills/orientation</li> </ol>
Responses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acquisition of new media tools</li> <li>2. Acquisition of new media skills</li> <li>3. Reorganisation of gatekeeping structure</li> <li>4. Exploring multimedia content</li> <li>5. Emphasis on credibility</li> <li>6. Emphasis on Investigation/analysis/details</li> </ol>

**Table 4:** Tabular Summary of Analysis I – Content Management.

### Section 5.1.2 Human Resources Development

Potential changes in the dynamics of skills required to effectively function as a gatekeeper in the Internet-permeated media environment of today have been discussed among scholars. Basically, there appears to be a consensus that these changes are real (Abati, 2014; Kebbel, 2014; Mayhew, 2018). This sentiment finds a place in both the Technological Determinism and Disruptive Technology theories because they are technologically rooted.

Quite predictably, the emerging new media culture has fundamentally challenged the human resources aspect of the management of the newspapers under study. From the submissions of the interviewees, it is clear that adaptation by the workforce is no longer an option. *The Nation* Managing Director emphasised:

Every staff must be new media compliant. It is compulsory and even at the point of recruiting; we ensure that applicants have the skills. [...] It has compelled us to retrain our staff to be able to cope with the new demands of new media because it requires new skills to be able to cope. We have been training our staff. We are sending them for both internal and external training. You cannot be reporting without knowing what is online and how to respond to it. I mean typically, press statement will be issued before, but now even a tweet can become a story; so every reporter needs to understand how that works. You have to have people on Facebook, to be able to get information and even right now, we recruit and emphasise that they are internet literates.

The *Daily Trust* Managing Editor agrees that the new era has imposed the need for new skills, having entirely transformed the work process. He argued that “there are software that have changed dramatically the way we do our work”, implying that personnel must acquire knowledge of the use of such software. Similarly, “there are new hardware, digital hardware, replacing the old ones, and these workers must be conversant with how to operate them.” For *The Sun MD*, management in the new media and old media eras is basically the same. The major difference is the different form of expertise required. “Whether new media or old media, they all feed on news. They are the same basically. All you need is to have experts in those areas. The *Daily Trust* Editor had this to say about the adjustment in human resources ongoing in his organization:

Media managers should be technologically savvy. They should update their technological skills. We have an online editor who is a journalist but is also skilled in the area of digital content and digital production... Just last year, we invited the Press Association to train our journalists in the area of digital content and they spent a week training them.

The *Daily Times* is part of this scenario as well, as its MD admits that the paper has infused the awareness of digital culture into its personnel. This implies that they have not only acquired the requisite digital skills but have been orientated towards these digital technologies in their tasks.

The foregoing is important as the acquisition of digital skills alone may not guarantee the targeted journalistic productivity. Digital skills are not necessarily journalistic skills. The two have to be synergised to maximise value. *The Nation* MD, further said that, “typically, press statements were issued before, but now even a tweet can become a story, so every reporter needs to understand how that works.” In other words, while knowing how to access and operate a Twitter account is an ICT skill, using it to generate newspaper content requires the merging of this skill with journalistic skills. The journalist thus arguably assumes greater human resource value by being an embodiment of double skills.

Mdlongwa (2009) observed that such skill adjustment has been an important response strategy by traditional media organisations to the emerging realities of the new media culture. Its implications are that newspaper workers now possess an extra skill i.e. ICT capabilities.

Table 5 - a tabular summary of analysis II - Human resources development - below has been designed and put forward by the study. It is a summary of points that emerged from the analysis under the theme and component of 'human resources development management'. It highlights core identified opportunities and challenges which new media technologies represent for Nigerian newspaper managers in the area of human resources development management as well as their responses to this effect. The opportunities are reflected in human resource optimization, while the challenges come by way of the need for personnel that possess the requisite skills. Thus, the newspapers respond by pursuing training/retraining of their personnel, the adoption of new media skills as a recruitment criterion, and the reorganization of gatekeeping structures.

Implications	Details
Opportunities	1. Human resource optimisation
Challenges	1. Need for human capital that possesses the requisite skills
Responses	1. New media skill as a recruitment criterion 2. Training/retraining of staff 3. Reorganisation of gatekeeping structure

**Table 5:** Tabular Summary of Analysis II – Human Resources Development.

### Section 5.1.3 Revenue

Revenue remains the fulcrum of a media organisation as far as operational continuity is concerned. Little wonder scholars and other stakeholders, while



discussing the effect of new media on traditional media, have seemed mainly concerned with issues of revenue. Stated differently, their major concern has been that traditional media establishments are losing their market share as a result of the growing emergence of online-based alternatives (Onyima, 2014; Mayhew, 2018). In other words, the changes in technology have disrupted the previously prevailing revenue streams and replaced them with new practices that pose both opportunities and challenges for investors and practitioners.

News organisations earn their revenue principally from circulation and advertising. The Internet has helped in circulation through making simultaneous printing in various locations possible. The *Daily Trust* Editor noted that in production:

In production... during what I may call the analogue age, you have to set your materials, organize your paper, put it in a flash or disk and then go to the press house. But with the Internet, you can produce a newspaper with the same content from different locations. For example, in *Daily Trust*, we have four presses in Abuja, Lagos, Maiduguri and Kano. We therefore publish the same stories simultaneously. So it has made things easier. It has helped in distribution of copies - Lagos covers the south, Maiduguri covers the northeast, Kano covers the northwest and Abuja covers the north central.

Two of the remaining three newspapers – *The Sun* and *The Nation* – are also involved in such simultaneous printing aided by Internet technology. Centrally designed pages are sent to various printing locations using the Internet for lithographers to complete the job of turning out ready copies. This may represent an opportunity for the newspapers to achieve better physical presence which may

help in furthering circulation in the face of new media's adverse influence on circulation. But does this translate into the actual selling copies?

This question becomes relevant in the face of the previous arguments about new media culture being a monopoly breaker. We suggested that Internet technologies have liberalised the information space such that more and more players have come on board. We have also shown previously how the internet has brought alternative news sources. The media managers have found ways to meet the challenges – in most cases a hybridization of the new and the old. What has remained a daunting challenge is how to position the brand to be top priority for the readers, as the internet is fraught with distractions. For instance, the *Daily Times* MD said:

As a digital platform, you are competing against everything else on the Internet, media or not, for the attention of each reader. Hence, the goal is to position the brand so it is also a top priority for readers.

For the *Daily Times* Editor, "Competition is stiffer when it comes to securing the attention of the digital customer with the plethora of things seeking their attention on the internet." Thus, even when newspapers poach from the strengths of the Internet to increase their readership, they still have to contend with the dwindling circulation of the hardcopies – which no doubt affects the revenue. They affirmed that their hardcopies have been experiencing circulation decline due to the availability of digital alternative news sources. However, both The *Sun* Business Development Manager and *Daily Trust* Marketing Manager added that this poor patronage of the hardcopy is seen more with the younger generation (readers below 40). This is in line with the statistics from previous studies showing that

Internet access and use is found mostly among young people (Bankole & Babalola, 2012; Ibia & Ekott, 2013; Ekweli 2017).

Another new dynamic that is considered to affect the revenue is the copyright side of the rivalry with the online news. Bloggers infringe on the news the newspapers have developed without giving them credit. *The Sun* MD has seen this as a predatory tendency, insisting that “they are like vultures on our products”. He cited incidents like their story of the woman impregnated by her son-in-law; and the bloggers immediately copied the story and it went viral. *The Sun* was not given the credit, neither did they reap any financial gain.

In Nigeria, effective enforcement of copyright has been a perennial problem affecting the book, music and motion picture industry (Nwogu, 2019). With the Internet, the newspaper industry is now also facing the same problem as it struggles to protect its online content. Given the special challenge presented by the Internet with regard to copyright protection since 2016, a bill has been laid before the Nigerian National Assembly to amend the nation’s copyright act with a view to strengthening it for the challenges of the Internet era. The bill, following the example of the US Digital Millennium Act, intends, among other measures, to place responsibility for removing infringing materials and closing offending sites on Internet service providers. However, as of 2019, the bill is yet to be passed into law (Nwogu, 2019).

Measures such as passage and implementation of this law will definitely benefit the newspaper industry as it attempts to make the most of the online technology in terms of revenue. The industry players need to take strategic steps rather than just watch things unfold. Groups such as the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) and the Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE) are in the position to make this push. These bodies have in the past projected certain interests of the industry.

Some of the factors that have affected circulation decline include poverty and increasing poor reading culture, especially among the younger generation (Egbochukwu, 2013; Nkemdilim, 2015). Consequently, it is unclear whether the fall in sales can be fully attributed to the advent of the Internet. However, some previous studies (such as Nkemdilim, 2015; Layefa, Johnson and Taiwo, 2016) have shown that a significant number of readers with access to online newspapers have tended not to purchase hardcopies anymore. Also, the responses from the FGD discussants are revealing in this regard. Discussant 1 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) notes that buying a newspaper is dependent on how many details are left out in the online news, “so the online experience has affected the number of newspapers I buy. In the past, I used to buy two newspapers daily, but now I usually buy one”. So, as far as such readers are concerned, to the extent the online version serves, the hardcopy can be dispensed with. For Discussant 4 (Wuse, January 14, 2019), the cheapness of online reading is the advantage it has over hard copy version and for Discussant 15 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019), the instant nature of online reading

as well as its ability to engage with others in conversation is responsible for his preference.

The implications of the above responses are that access to online newspapers has negatively affected patronage of hardcopies. As observable from the responses, the advantages of time, convenience and cost, which online newspapers offer, are responsible for this situation. Thus, while poverty has always affected newspaper purchase in the country (even before the advent of new media, as seen earlier), with new media, this effect of poverty has deepened as more readers may find a less costly alternative in new media channels. This is the point being made by *The Sun* MD when he identified poverty as a catalyst for sales decline attendant on the advent of online newspapers. As stated earlier, while 200 naira (52 cents) would buy a copy of newspaper, a smartphone owner who purchases data of that amount or less would for a few days read several newspapers while also using the data to surf the net for other purposes. Thus, the MD wondered how people would buy newspapers if they lack the wherewithal, observing that in the face of growing economic hardship ‘an average person would rather use their 200 naira (52 cents) to purchase a tuber of yam than buy a newspaper copy’. The interviewee was specifically making reference to the economic recession that hit Nigeria in 2016 and whose effects are yet to disappear. Instructively, the *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor also alluded to this very factor in his submission regarding the sales challenges confronting his newspaper. One of the discussants, Discussant 18 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) corroborated this when he noted that the economic downturn in the country had forced him to drop his practice of purchasing a

newspaper every day. He now prefers buying just once a week while he goes to newsstands to read for free every other day.

Conclusively, the ultimate victim here is the traditional newspapers' old monopoly of information dissemination. With the technical disruption represented by the transition from paper to electronics, these newspapers are forced to adjust by also integrating the digital platforms with the attendant loss in circulation revenue. They also have to battle with the reality that the information explosion being brought about by new media is leading to a corresponding scarcity of attention. Stated differently, at some time in the past, there were limited amounts of information, hence there were always audiences to pay attention to this. However, as time went by, information quantity continued to grow to such an extent that today it has outstripped the number of consumers, thus bringing about what scholars have described as scarcity of attention. With new media technologies, not only is the quantum of information growing astronomically, accessibility of such information is radically deepening as the personalised orientation of new platforms media ensures that information is now practically searching for readers/viewers (McQuail, 2010; Williams, 2016).

However, beyond integrating digital technologies, the newspapers may also begin to confront the economic handicap through giving serious thought to one event that has not happened in the Nigerian newspaper industry but has formed part of the response strategies of newspapers in the west, which includes journalistic co-operatives, mergers and acquisitions. Journalistic co-operatives would allow

newspaper houses to build a pool where resources, information and personnel are mobilized to take up a common high-profile task or investigation. Journalistic co-operatives appear similar to mergers and acquisitions, except that their strength would lie in pooling resources to create content. Here, the newspaper houses are solely coming together to undertake a particular common task. The activity does not affect the management of each participating newspaper house.

The newspaper business is capital intensive due to expensive equipment, talent (e.g., journalists, editors), and distribution costs. So, it is only logical that the more capital is pooled together, the better their chances of survival. Several newspapers have appeared and disappeared in Nigeria in the past, having failed to hold their own in the market (Agusiobo, 2018). Interestingly, a similar challenge in the Nigerian banking sector was confronted and effectively solved in 2004 by the policy of compulsory mergers or acquisitions which reduced the number of commercial banks in the country from over 100 to just 25; with these 25 emerging as very formidable banks by local standards (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). Also, having several newspapers forming a big conglomerate may be a better option than having independent newspapers. The experience of the *Daily Times* conglomerate of the 1970s and 1980s and that of *The West African Pilot* from the 1930s to 1960s are good local examples that could be reinvented in the current era. However, attention should also be paid to the existing reality that conglomerates taking over or merging media organisations could enthrone a renewed hegemony that would undermine diversity of voices. This has been the central concern of critics of the capitalist model of media ownership and control in the west (Petley, 2004; Gilens &

Hertzman, 2000; Badgikian, 1983). As stated earlier in this thesis, Nigeria embodies ethnic, religious, political and cultural diversities that have also reflected in the tone and slant of newspaper contents in the country. Particular newspapers have sought to identify with particular ethnic, religious, political and cultural tendencies as a way of gaining acceptance in a particular region or zone of the country. Thus, for conglomeration to work in Nigeria, without undermining the industry itself, managers of such conglomerates must advert their minds to this reality.

The proliferation of online platforms also implies a fall in advert subscriptions for traditional newspapers. The *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor aptly captured this scenario when he observed that the availability of Internet platforms “means advertisers have a choice beyond the hardcopies of the newspaper.” Similarly, *The Sun* Business Development Manager corroborated that the competition for advert money is getting more intense every day as more online news sites emerge. Also, *The Nation* Marketing Manager agreed that traditional newspapers now share the advertising market with “all sorts of other platforms besides television and radio that have since been there.”

While it is true that new media have heightened revenue competition, it could still be said that they have, for traditional newspapers, opened a new advert window. However, *The Nation* Marketing Manager, while admitting this, noted that his newspaper makes money through online advertising but that ‘the amount of money earned, though growing, is still not significant’. This he attributed to the fact that more online platforms are joining the competition for the limited advert money.



The Daily *Trust* CEO/Managing Editor accused “the big tech companies like Google and others” of “collecting the significant amounts of advert money and giving you peanuts. Our business model is even being threatened from that perspective.” The new technological reality has shifted the revenue power into the hands of the big technology owners. He commented that his medium has started responding to this challenge through “making efforts to drive traffic on their website since earning is based on visits and the number of clicks made on one’s site”. Besides this, the newspaper charges money for some of their content by putting them behind pay walls. He, however, observed that this is a risky approach as readers may be forced to go to sites where they will read content for free.

The Marketing Manager of the *Daily Trust*, while corroborating the strategy of charging for some of the content of the e-copy, admitted that “the problem is that the value of e-copy is only a fraction of that of the hardcopy, but it is more easily distributed to readers.” In other words, it does not exactly solve the problem of loss of circulation. This therefore affirmed studies such as those by Dare (2011), Tommy (2014), Hassan *et al* (2015) and Hassan *et al* (2018) that had identified free online news as a significant factor affecting newspaper circulation and readership in Nigeria.

The situation where content creators appear to be cheated out of the revenue accruing from such content by ICT giants like Google is a global challenge. The pervasiveness of this challenge has in September 2018 made the EU respond by

proposing a new law titled *Copyright Directive*. The law is intended to address some of the problems of copyright in the Internet age. In particular, its Article 11 seeks to compel information aggregators such as Google to pay the creators of such information whenever they quote from such content. This legislation has been greeted by much controversy as different vested interests tend to interpret it from different perspectives (Vincent & Brandom, 2018). The *Daily Trust* MD mentioned the need for newspapers to unite to fight what he sees as injustice by giants like Google. Perhaps, this may be realized if newspapers in Nigeria and other countries of Africa initiate advocacy aimed at pressurizing their national governments and regional authorities to imitate the example of the EU in the *Copyright Directive*. The history of the evolution of the modern industrial and economic system reveals that every technical progress of significant dimension usually creates its winners and losers. The losers naturally begin to protest, often forcing the authorities to intervene with legislation and policies aimed at arresting exploitation and unfair competition (Richards & Hunt, 1965).

Nonetheless, the foregoing indicates that the newspapers are experiencing a revenue challenge which is rooted in their dependence on prevailing technologies. Stated differently, new media technologies and culture, as far as revenue is concerned, represent a disruptive element for the newspapers. These technologies have disrupted the old order of moneymaking with its associated monopoly and imposed a new one with its own peculiar challenges. Instructively, this is obviously not limited to the Nigerian newspaper space, as it is a global experience. This can be

gleaned from statistics on the state of the traditional newspaper sector in the United States (Mitchell & Matsa, 2015; Pew Research Centre, 2018).

Already, newspapers in Nigeria, like their counterparts elsewhere, have adopted the strategy of offering their online content for free to attract readership and advertisers in what has been termed “freemium” - as coined from “premium” (William, 2016). These newspapers have adopted the culture of making their news content available on their websites. Links are also created on their social media platforms, particularly Facebook and Twitter. All these are accessed by readers without having to make any financial commitment.

However, the *Daily Times* MD foresaw a future where this will extend to the hardcopies themselves. He predicted that in a few years, Nigerian newspapers will begin to hand out their hardcopies free of charge to readers while focusing on earning money through their digital platforms. However, his counterpart in the *Daily Trust* was more cautious, recalling that “a newspaper proprietor, Kola Abiola, had tried it 20 years earlier with his *Concord* Newspapers without success, just like other newspapers that tried it with a similar outcome”. He thus cautioned that before any such approach is adopted, care must be taken to study the environment and ensure that the circumstances are favourable. Importantly, any newspaper planning to adopt free distribution ought to check its pocket to confirm it has enough money to sustain it for the reasonable length of time that may be required before the dividends will begin to come in. Anything to the contrary, he reasoned, will amount to taking an unnecessary risk.

The foregoing suggests that the managers may have found themselves in a dilemma regarding the strategy of foregoing hardcopy circulation earning in expectation of advert revenues. They are concerned about the risks involved.

Apart from serving as a platform for direct earnings, new media also represent, in the views of the managers, an indirect means of aiding the revenue earning process of newspapers. In other words, new media resources are deployed in strengthening the efficiency of the revenue generation process. *The Sun* Business Development Manager, in this respect, stated that they adopted the Internet, email and social media to reach their clients. Hence, advert materials to be published can be sent digitally to the newspaper from wherever the client is based with minimal interference of space and time. Once any such material is sent, she as the head of marketing can, from her email address, send it to the production staff for onward processing. All this, she said, has made the job much easier and faster. The *Daily Trust* Marketing Manager concurred by observing that the Internet has made workflow quicker unlike in the past when there were a lot of difficulties reporting revenues. As it is today, daily sales figures can be reported from outstations to the headquarters on a daily basis for collation through the instrumentality of the Internet.

One may argue that the above advantage is peripheral given that it is concerned basically with administrative aspects of the revenue process and not the revenue earnings itself. Receiving advert materials via email and reporting sales via email

may appear not to be as urgent a need for newspapers as is convincing advertisers to place their adverts in the first place. However, a closer look at how new media technology affects the workflow and revenue process helps to understand its impact in this regard. In the past, advert placements coming from places far from the headquarters of a newspaper must be booked some days ahead at any of the paper's outstations in different parts of the country. Such advertisements, depending on its nature, may have to be physically sent to the headquarters by the outstation. But with new media, the process becomes more seamless and time-saving as adverts can now be handled at much shorter notices and without involving elaborate logistics. Newspapers have also introduced a do-it-yourself service whereby persons who want to place adverts or notices can personally send in the details and relevant documents and designs via the website of the newspaper. Payment for the placement can then be made online or at a bank. Clients who take this option are rewarded with some reduction in cost as the services they would have got from outstations have been dispensed with. No doubt, all this eases the work process of advertising department possibly allowing staff to reduce time spent on processing advert placements and increase time spent on scouting for advertisements. Thus, it would be correct to state that since the Internet has imposed a new culture of rapidity on business transactions, including advert placement, a newspaper house is very likely to compromise its competitiveness if it fails to adopt the practice of quickening its business reporting process through the use of technology. On this account, adopting new media technologies in aid of such revenue processes is a compelling response imposed on the newspapers by the new dispensation and a choice that makes financial sense.

Table 6 below offers a summary of points that emerged from analysing the theme “Revenue”. On the one hand, this shows the opportunities and challenges which new media technologies present for newspaper managers in Nigeria in regard to revenue as well as how they have responded to these. The opportunities are reflected in added online-based revenue sources, e-copy sales earnings, online advert earnings, and an easing of the marketing process. The challenges, on the other hand, are seen in the reduction in hardcopy sales and hardcopy advert subscriptions. On the other hand, the managers’ response to the opportunities and challenges include integrating online advert placements, offering of online content free to attract advert subscriptions (freemium), selling of online content and adoption of new media technologies to make revenue generation processes faster and more seamless.

<b>Implications</b>	<b>Details</b>
Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added online-based revenue sources</li> <li>2. E-copy sales earnings</li> <li>3. Online advert earnings</li> <li>4. Easing of marketing process</li> </ol>
Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduction in hardcopy sales</li> <li>2. Reduction in hardcopy advert subscriptions</li> </ol>
Responses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrating online advert placements</li> <li>2. Offer of free online content to attract advert subscriptions (freemium)?</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Paid online content</p> <p>4. Adopting new media technologies to make revenue generation processes faster and more seamless.</p>
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**Table 6:** Tabular Summary of Analysis III – Revenue.

#### Section 5.1.4 Prospects

What is the ultimate future of traditional newspapers in view of the disruptions brought about by new media? The answer to this question will depend a lot on how the newspaper managers understand the present scenario and what they are putting in place in anticipation of all possible future scenarios. *The Nation* Managing Director saw the present experience as a “drastic and unsettling” one. His judgment is rooted in the reality that copy sales are falling and advert revenues are dwindling. He viewed the situation as a critical one and that no one is sure of the eventual outcome. “I mean how sure are we that after investing so much money to buy ink and print copies, people are going to buy?”, he questioned, adding that the continued decrease in income will ultimately make the unit cost price unmanageable for the media organisations and the selling price unaffordable for the readers. The *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor shares a similar sentiment. He viewed the situation as critical and capable of degenerating to an unmanageable stage. He noted that the “newspaper industry globally is in crisis as many old newspapers have stopped their hardcopy production as this has become unsustainable”. While noting that his newspaper is fortunate to still retain its hardcopy, he admitted some uncertainty on how much longer they can carry on in

view of significant losses in copy sales. He could only “pray” that his paper will not “stoop” to the level of organisations such as *The Guardian* in the UK, which actually appeals for monetary support from the public to carry on. He also observed that a similar trend is already found in Nigeria with the *Premium Times*. However, it appears the MD was assessing *The Guardian* model only from the perspective of the seeming loss of self-funding capability, hence his pessimism. But a broader picture reveals a new model that potentially deepens accountability by making a media organisation reliant on goodwill donations from her audience; a goodwill she must earn and retain through performance. This logic tends to align more with the ‘Fourth Estate’ philosophy of the modern mass media as the success of media is made to depend on the extent it satisfies the public. Thus, while this model may have been necessitated by the market difficulties of the time, it is nonetheless revolutionary in view of its broader implications for journalistic values. Instructively, the fact that it seems to have worked for *The Guardian*, Firefox and other crowd-funded businesses may be a pointer to the direction newspaper business is ultimately headed.

*The Sun* MD agreed with his counterparts that new media represents some disruption in all areas, “ranging from production to distribution and market penetration. [...] You will be right if you describe the situation as threatening. I am afraid and can’t just say what may happen next.”

While the above three MDs’ perceptions of the situation tend to reveal some pessimism and anxiety, contrarily, the *Daily Times* MD appeared to be more



optimistic. He was apparently not convinced that the new media culture has been so extreme in its impact. For him, the impact has been neither drastic nor unsettling. On the contrary, he argued, “new media technologies have complemented the traditional newspaper processes and brought more efficiency”. He did, however, recognise the slippery and uncertain nature of the new media phase. According to him, transitioning to the new media era “requires consistency” on the part of any newspaper house, “because it is very easy to disrupt and displace anyone. The goal is to remain consistent.” The last statement tends to betray his anxiety, his appreciation of the situation as precarious – capable of swallowing anyone. It also demonstrates his understanding of the new reality, and the need to adapt and be consistent.

Whatever may be the opinions of these managers, it is clear from the above responses that their experience so far has made them clearly appreciate that what they are confronting is a new critical challenge that ought to be responded to with urgency, as it could determine whether they survive or not. Thus, they appear to be informed enough as not to be taken unawares.

However, these managers still believe that there is still work to do, and opportunities to be exploited. They do not think they have come to the end of the road yet; there are still possibilities to be harnessed. The *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor reasoned that they could perform better than they are currently doing. He stated that much of what his organisation is doing is a “work in progress” as they experiment with various options towards finding the ultimate solution on daily

basis. The *Daily Trust* Director, Corporate Affairs reasoned in a similar direction, noting that they are continuing to work towards “integrating the Internet to keep their brand competitive in the new dispensation”. The *Daily Sun* Editor was quite optimistic that the hardcopy will not die, as evidenced by the fact that radio did not die with the advent of television as predicted. He was thus of the belief that the ‘Internet will complement the hardcopy as long as newspapers are’ aware that they need to ‘re-strategize in line with the demands of the current era’.

The interviewees tended to agree that there is some fundamental change, a new culture, which must be carefully and efficiently dealt with, if not, one may be risking being left behind. This culture embodies a new competitive space, some novelty in the dynamism of competition which the *Daily Times* MD was obviously alluding to when he submitted that his organisation “would continue to open up new vistas. [...] by leveraging new media channels. It would also require innovations and disruptions to some extent on our part. But whatever we could *we are not letting go of the internet*” (Emphasis supplied). On the contrary, however, it is the Internet that is not letting go of the newspaper managers because it imposes a new culture and it is the prevailing rule, it is the constant element. The *Daily Times MD* is of course no less aware of this, as he admitted that his newspaper’s boast to be “the oldest and most prestigious newspaper in Nigeria” will amount to nothing if they fail to constantly reinvent themselves and advance with the times. He admitted that one way of doing this is to cash in on the opportunities provided by new media given that digital technologies will be the bedrock of the future media industry.

All the other interviewees are obviously not ignorant of the new dynamics of survival and the new rules of competitiveness. *The Nation* MD admitted that not all newspapers will survive the new era as “a few” will be consumed in the intervening competition which is “going to be survival of the fittest.” Those who lack the finances and know-how to make the indispensable transition and adjustments will not survive. The *Daily Sun* Editor believed his newspaper is “coping well absolutely.” He preferred to see the new dispensation from the positive side of the opportunities that it embodies, citing the example of how his newspaper has leveraged new media to integrate visuals as part of its content, thus “doing some of the things a television station does.” While The *Daily Times* MD and *The Nation* Managing Editor were similarly satisfied with the response of Nigerian newspapers so far, the *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor was not as generous. He believed a lot is still required of the players, reasoning that the response of the players has been generally “poor”. He admitted that they have been slow in responding even as “some of the media houses seem not to understand which way is up regarding this problem.” In other words, traditional media houses were not proactive enough to quickly adapt in terms of leveraging online content distribution and advertising platforms, such that blogs and other emerging online news platforms are taking the initiative. He regretted that he and his colleagues could have done much better than they are doing currently, and thus could have averted the current scenario wherein a number of the newspapers are at risk of disappearing any time soon. The interviewee admitted that they should have learnt their lesson early enough from what has been happening with newspapers in Europe and America. He admitted

that today newspapers in Nigeria are not where they should be in terms of online revenue because they had failed to be proactive.

Even though the *Daily Trust* CEO's observations tend to contradict those of the other interviewees who appeared more positive in their assessment of how the newspaper industry in Nigeria has been coping with the new media challenge, there appears to be a meeting point between the two opinions, which is that the newspapers still have more to do. This is clear from the views of all the interviewees. The difference seems to be that while others believed that what has so far been achieved is the best the newspapers can do at the moment, the *Daily Trust* CEO felt it is not. Though it may be difficult to say which opinion is exactly right, one obvious fact is that the Nigerian newspaper industry appears fated to lag behind its western counterparts. The factors of poor Internet penetration vis-à-vis what can be obtained in the developed world, irregular electricity supply, bandwidth deficiency and high cost of Internet access all tend to affect audience access to online newspapers (Adetusi, 2015). All these tend to limit the extent to which newspapers can reap the benefits of the new era. The *Daily Trust* Editor Daily agreed, pointing out that factors like electricity, Internet connectivity and quality of network service "affect how much we are able to harness the Internet in our operation." He cited the example of how their website goes down at times and they have to call their service provider to fix this.

Interestingly, a newspaper reader, Discussant 15 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) corroborated the above submission. He recalled that a friend of his who works in a

newspaper house informed him of electricity problems impeding their operations and increasing their costs as they constantly purchased diesel to power their generator.

Based on their personal experiences, other discussants also identified these power and Internet shortcomings as a hindrance to accessing online newspapers. These include Discussant 5 (Wuse, January 14, 2019), Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) and Discussant 19 (Ikeja, January 22, 2019). However, it was Discussant 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) who captured the situation most succinctly:

I read online newspapers sometimes. [...] But sometimes, I don't read. I might have problem with my battery due to power failure. If I don't have enough data, I might not be able to read. These are some of the challenges that prevent me from reading the online versions. And if I have such challenges, I am compelled to go to a newspaper stand close to me to read hardcopies free.

The emphasis on data availability obviously stemmed from the fact that Internet data is still particularly costly in Nigeria, even though remarkable progress has been made to reduce cost over the past few years mainly due to growing competition among an increasing number of service providers. Other factors include improvement in telecommunication infrastructure and government regulatory interventions. Nevertheless, unsteady energy supply remains a key challenge affecting Internet service provision. .Currently, network providers use diesel-powered generators to generate power for their operations thereby significantly raising their cost of production, which are inevitably passed on to the consumer (Egbochulwu, 2013; Edegoh, Ezeh & Aniebo, 2015). Thus, Discussant 8 (Awka,

December 22, 2018) stated that “opening their (newspapers’) websites is data consuming.” He noted that it takes longer for such websites to open as compared with websites of foreign newspapers, thus causing more data consumption. On his part, Discussant 15 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019), said that cost of data is a recurring problem. “Data involvement is my handicap,” he said. He was unsatisfied with the amount he had to part with to be able to purchase data.

From the perspective of audience participation, Internet access, data costs and power supply emerge as dominant factors adversely affecting online newspapers readership. But these factors are admittedly extrinsic; they did not originate from, nor do they sit within the internal process of the newspapers. They are environmental factors for which the newspaper managers will not be wholly blamed. However, outside these extrinsic factors, have the newspapers played their part within the possibilities of the local environment? The discussants were generally positive here, observing that news is now delivered as fast as it breaks as a result of integration of online technologies. For instance, Discussant 5 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) praised the manner in which newspapers report events as they break. He saw this as a ‘huge leap’ from the older method where one had to wait until the following day to read the report in a hardcopy paper.

Nonetheless, some of the readers still had some complaints to make about the newspapers. These complaints focused on the structure and design of the websites, their interactivity and speed. The contribution of Discussant 7 (Awka, December 22, 2018) is instructive here. He expressed dissatisfaction with the online presence of

Nigerian newspapers. He described the online presence of Western newspapers as “a lot more user-friendly”. Apart from lacking certain important features, (such as what?) the online presence of some Nigerian newspapers, according to this discussant, “is nothing to write home about.” He was also not happy that these newspapers are leaving a lot of developments in society unreported, “because most of the newspaper outfits we have do not have the capacity to hold their own; so it tends to limit the number of stories they publish. So, they have not capitalized on online technology to increase their capacity in this regard.” This discussant felt that online technology ought to increase the capacity of the newspapers to cover more issues in society, since these technologies ease and quicken the work of reporters, thus affording them time to report more issues than they could have reported without them. This observation is valid as may be demonstrated using smartphones. Prior to the advent of this tool, a Nigerian journalist may have to first write his/her report on a paper, then proceed to get it typed before using a faxing machine to wire it to the office – all these may entail going from one location to the other to get each stage done, possibly via the services of a second party. However, with a smartphone, all tools required by the journalist to write, edit and send out reports are assembled on a single platform. So, he/she does not need to move from location to location, neither does any second party services required to get the job done. The discussant also talked about the speed of the internet and other technical lapses, including failure of newspapers’ internal search engines to locate content. It is possible that these difficulties are from users’ access speed, but then the discussants spoke in comparative terms; they said their experience with some other (non-newspaper) sites was much better.

In the course of the FGD sessions, the researcher observed that the Discussant 7 (Awka, December 22, 2018) was particularly knowledgeable and critical in the way he approached newspapers and the media in general. This disposition singled him out among others. However, one may argue that his critical disposition may not represent the disposition of the average reader. Whether such an assessment is true or false, it is still a pointer to the fact that there exist among local readers other people like Discussant 7 (Awka, December 22, 2018) who are well informed and have, through the Internet, been exposed to the best online newspaper practices as seen typically in the West. Of course, it is only reasonable to assume that the growing Internet penetration in Nigeria can increase such cross-cultural exposure of many more citizens.

Another important point emerging from the interview responses as far as the future prospect of traditional newspapers is concerned is the fact that the market potentials of the hardcopy appear yet underexplored in Nigeria. Some of the respondents alluded to or explicitly mentioned the fact that their newspapers are yet to fully explore their circulation potentials. The transport infrastructure in Nigeria has been characterised as poor because of dilapidated roads, and underdeveloped railway network system. Consequently, it has been difficult for newspapers organisations to send their copies to all corners of the country (Egbochukwu, 2013). This scenario is more challenging for many national newspapers who have only one printing press compared to others like the *Daily Trust*, which has already established four printing presses in four locations across



the country, with plans to establish even more printing press to improve their circulation capabilities. Evidence from the FGD shows that these gaps have been felt by readers themselves. For instance, Discussant 2 (Wuse, January 14, 2019) urged that the “channel of distribution of hardcopies should improve. There are areas that if you don’t go to, you cannot read [a] newspaper.” Discussant 22 (Ikeja, January 22, 2019) also testified that sometimes “you might want to read a particular publication, say *The Guardian*, and the vendors around you may not have it, so you would rely on your phone Internet to access it.”

The suggestion that the newspapers may still find some breathing space in the face of the new media challenge by exploring the seemingly unexplored potentials of the hardcopy in Nigeria is further validated by the readers when questioned on whether they still found the hardcopy relevant. Their responses can only expose the fact that there are still some systemic factors that could give some oxygen of survival to the hardcopy in the country. The discussants who include Discussants: 2 (Wuse, January 14, 2019), 6 (Wuse, January 14, 2019), 10 (Awka, December 22, 2018) and 17 (Port Harcourt, January 18, 2019) argue that the hardcopy still retains enough relevance that it will be unreasonable and unhelpful to phase it out. Their major concern is that not everybody will, as it stands today, be able to access online newspapers owing to environmental factors including ownership of Internet-enabled devices, cost of data, level of Internet awareness, and the older generation readers’ attachment to hardcopy. Moreover, “the arid nature of many African countries makes direct (internet) line connections both economically prohibitive and technically difficult” (Anyanwu, 2019, p.184). Thus, the same hindering factors of

poverty, lack of Internet access and lack of Internet awareness may still offer some reprieve for the newspapers in the face of the suffocating challenge of the new media era.

The argument that Nigeria is yet to tap some of its hardcopy potentials is further reinforced by demographic realities. Records show that currently over 35% of the country's population is illiterate. This illiterate segment is concentrated in northern Nigeria, which naturally accounts for an important, if not the major, reason newspaper readership is concentrated in the south (Eze, 2007). Much higher rates of poverty in the north are another factor. While improvement in literacy rate has been rather slow in the country, it has still been relatively steady. Consequently, the nation appears surely headed for a future where most if not all citizens will be literate. Imo in South-East and Lagos in South-West are among the states that have shown that a 100% literacy standard is not beyond reach (NBS, 2016). Studies have shown that basic literacy, more than having tertiary education, is a predictor of newspaper readership in Nigeria (Eze, 2017; Edegoh *et al.*, 2015). So, practically, newspapers in the country still have over 30% of their potential market untapped due to the illiteracy barrier, a factor that may point to some future possibilities, other things being equal. Increasing urban population is another reason for possible optimism. Newspaper readership in Nigeria is concentrated in urban areas to the rate of more than 87%. The country's urban population has progressively increased since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. By year 2000, only about 33% of the population were urbans dwellers as against the current 51.2 %, meaning that 102,805,995 people are living in cities as of 2019 (Worldometer, 2020). Apart from its correlation with

higher income, urban life is associated with higher enlightenment and interest in political and social affair which is an important motivation for news consumption. Other things being equal, such a demographic shift may help the future of Nigerian newspaper industry.

However, as earlier stated, the newspapers may have to consider the option of strengthening their financial and logistical capability through mergers as a way of better positioning themselves to exploit these opportunities. The fact that these opportunities remain unexploited is indirect evidence that the capacity to exploit them may be lacking. For instance, failure to effectively cover the country in terms of circulation may be a pointer to shortcomings in finances and logistics.

Niche publishing is another strategy relevant for securing the future of the industry. Incidentally, on the *Daily Trust* MD mentioned this as one of the strategies explored by his newspaper to remain competitive. However, a shift towards this practice has been observed in the industry in recent years. Major national newspapers have increasingly introduced columns that cater for specific interests in society, from the more serious (such as manufacturing and infotech) to the merely recreational (such as entertainment and style). Most newspapers now have particular days on which one or some of these interests are given copious treatment by way of pull-outs in the major publication. Some newspapers, including *The Sun* and *The Nation*, have moved – with remarkable success – to explore the football passion of young male readers by introducing an all-football subsidiary publication that hits the newsstand daily. With just a few pages of stories and photos, these publications sell for just 50

naira (13 cents), a price incentive that must have contributed to their high acceptability. Apart from these separate publications, the papers present pull-out sports pages in their main publications on specific days. Niche publication targeting sport audience has proved particularly effective in Nigeria since the launch of *Sporting Champion* by *Champion* newspapers in the late 1980s. With the past successes of *Business Champion* (by *Champion* newspapers), and *Sporting Times* and *Business Times* (by *Daily Times*), Nigeria newspapers may begin to think of moving towards launching separate publications that address special interests other than sports. For instance, doing so in regard to areas such as fashion, style and relationship which have proven to be of particular interest to women may be an effective strategy for motivating women to start reading newspapers. Findings by Edegoh *et al.* (2015) that women constituted only 1.2% of newspaper readers among 480 sampled respondents as well as similar findings by other researchers points to some future possibilities for Nigerian newspapers if a culture of female newspaper readership can be built via niche publication.

Newspapers in Nigeria have also started exploring other revenue streams different from the core newspaper business. While all the managers interviewed admitted that this is the case with their establishments, only the *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor was willing to give some details of their revenue diversification which included offering printing services using their press, a venture which has rewarded the company in just 2017 with over 600 million naira (\$1.67M).

While the managers might have varying views regarding the performance of the newspapers in responding to the imperatives of the new media era, the bottom line is that they seem to fully appreciate that there is a new challenge to face. They understand that to survive tomorrow, one needs to adjust to the demands of the new media culture. Their responses also reveal that they are making some efforts in this regard. These efforts are a continuous process just as the new media culture is still evolving – particularly in the context of a developing country like Nigeria where the Internet is yet to gain the extent of penetration it has gained in developed countries. Thus, responding to the challenge is a work-in-progress, according to *The Nation* Editor Daily:

“We can’t say we have done all we need to do. The new media is an evolving platform and we are doing our best to be up to date. We are reviewing how we operate. [...] We are exploring the revenue options, we are retraining our staff...We must keep abreast of the developments in new media and respond appropriately.”

Agreeing with this above line of thought, the *Daily Times* MD viewed the experience as a learning process in which “there is always a room for improvement.” It is “a journey to winning a fair chunk of the market share” and it “is very achievable and we are on course to achieving them already.”

Interestingly, the interviewees hold out hope for the survival of the hardcopy. Most affirmed their belief that the hardcopy will not become extinct. However, a closer look at their answers as a whole tends to reveal their actual uncertainty regarding the future. Each of them repeatedly alluded to the fact that what the newspapers are experiencing is a battle for survival. Of course, no battle for survival has its

outcome predetermined or foreknown. Perhaps, their affirmation that traditional newspapers will survive is a mere expression of optimism. In particular, the *Daily Trust* CEO/Managing Editor was remarkably cautious: “There is still some future, but *maybe a limited future*, for the print.” Nevertheless, his management-staff, the Director, Corporate Affairs/Editor, *Daily Trust* was forthright in accepting that the future is so uncertain that his paper is already preparing for what will happen in the event of the print copy becoming unsustainable. He believed that while the debate as to whether the hardcopy will survive or be supplanted rages on, it is necessary to work proactively to be able to meet the future in whatever form it presents itself. He pointed out that his medium is already doing this by diversifying its activities, for example by having a television component as part of their online platform. There is also a plan to go into radio production. “So, at any time we consider the hardcopy as no longer sustainable, we can continue with all these other aspects,” he said.

Similar, to scholars of journalism, these practitioners have yet to see far enough into the future of this oldest mass medium as it battles with a disruptive phase imposed by a radically transforming technology. At this juncture, it is important to mention that whatever the newspapers may be doing for their survival is amenable to other variables operating in society – whether foreseen or otherwise. These variables, being societal in nature, will be beyond the managers’ control. The economy easily constitutes one of the most important of these variables – and the respondents commented on this, particularly within the context of the economic recession that hit Nigeria from 2016. *The Sun* MD thus stated that the “newspaper industry suffers a lot as a result of the current economic situation in the country.

The business is very capital intensive, and navigating it is so fragile. So, things become very difficult once the economy makes any negative turn.” His counterparts at the *Daily Times* and *The Nation* completely agreed, pointing out that the rising cost of goods and services was increasingly making their operation very difficult. The immediate culprit here, as observed by *Daily Trust* Director, Corporate Affairs/DE, was the economic recession that commenced in 2016 and continued through 2017 and 2018 (its in 2019 that the nation’s economy started to recover from the recession regime). This “has impacted on the life of people and businesses. So, it is very difficult for newspapers to survive.” The Marketing Manager of the *Daily Trust* backed his submission with some revealing figures. According to him, newsprint, which is the key material for newspaper printing is imported at the US dollar rate. In 2014, the dollar exchanged at 160 naira per US dollar, and in 2015 it suddenly became 500 naira per dollar, a change that forced most newspapers in the country to increase their cover price. This increase in conjunction with the falling income of households, meant that the size of readership was significantly reduced.

The solution to the problem of the high cost of materials may call for thinking outside the box on the part of the managers. In the late 1930s up to the 1950s, Nigeria’s first national newspaper *The West African Pilot* adopted the strategy of integrating printing materials importation and distribution as part of the conglomerate. Thus, an “in-house” firm served the newsprint need of newspaper and that of other papers in the conglomerate, ensuring that nothing was spent outside the conglomerate in procuring resources. The proprietor of the newspaper,

the Late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, described this strategy as crucial to the huge success recorded by the paper (Azikiwe, 1970).

Table 7 gives a summary of points that emerged from the analysis made in this section. It shows the opportunities and challenges which new media represents for newspaper managers in Nigeria as well as their responses. The opportunities are reflected in a larger audience base, potential for a diversified revenue base, potential for greater sustainability, and the possibility of more online and hardcopy opportunities yet to be explored. The challenges, on the other hand, are seen in stiffer competition, low Internet penetration/access, cost of data, unsteady energy/electricity supply, technical issues with the website, uncertainties, possible impact of extrinsic factors (such as economic changes), and the prospect of displacement. The response comes in form of a continuous strive to deal with emerging challenges and diversification of revenue sources.

Implications	Details
Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Larger audience base</li> <li>2. Diversified revenue base</li> <li>3. More online opportunities yet to be explored</li> <li>4. More hardcopy opportunities yet to be explored</li> </ol>
Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stiffer competition</li> <li>2. Low Internet penetration/access</li> <li>3. Cost of data</li> <li>4. Electricity/energy</li> <li>5. Technical issues with website (clunky website)</li> </ol>



	6. Uncertain future  7. Possible impact of extrinsic factors (such as economic changes)  8. Prospect of complete displacement
Response	1. Continuous striving to deal with emerging challenges  2. Diversification of revenue sources

**Table 7:** Tabular Summary of Analysis IV – Prospects.

## Section 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The data analysis made above generally tends to validate the assumption that the advent of new media poses significant challenges for a traditional medium such as the newspaper, while at the same time presenting opportunities for it to sustain its relevance even as its very survival is threatened. Data show that in terms of content management, new media have tended to redefine the process of newspaper content generation, processing and dissemination – particularly as it concerns speed, message format and interactivity. The Nigerian newspapers have tried to respond to all this mainly through re-equipment, acquisition of new skills and reorganisation of their gatekeeping structure, and views related to digital content. They have further sought to leverage the opportunities offered by new media to enrich their content and maintain a more vibrant relationship with their readers through interactivity. Also, the newspapers have tried to exploit what is perceived as the credibility disadvantage of their online-based competitors by laying emphasis on factuality and accuracy in producing their content, thereby potentially gaining brand advantage through fidelity to time-honoured journalistic values. Similarly, the newspapers aim to exploit the depth shortcomings of some of their online-based

competitors by placing emphasis on investigative and analytical depth to gain brand uniqueness in the increasing attention scarcity brought about by new media.

In terms of human resources, new media were found to have also exerted a significant influence on the newspapers under study. New media technologies tend to impose the challenge of personnel adjustments not only in terms of acquiring new skills but also in terms of reorientation to achieve compliance with the new journalistic technicalities and ethos as brought about by new media. The newspapers are arguably also presented with an opportunity to optimise their human resources by achieving more with fewer hands. The newspapers under study have responded to all this by making possession of new media skills a crucial recruitment criterion, training/retraining personnel, and reorganising their gatekeeping structure to comply with the new realities of content generation, processing and dissemination.

In the area of revenue – the ultimate determinant of survival or extinction of the traditional newspaper – new media have also exerted an important influence. They have heightened competition for audience and advertising patronage leading to a reduction in hardcopy sales and advert revenues in the newspapers. At the same time, however, they have also presented for the newspapers what could turn out to be an opportunity for more revenue, particularly via e-copy sales, online advert earnings and the easing of the marketing process by way of limiting the barriers of time and space. The Nigerian newspapers have responded to this reality by integrating online revenue sources, offering free online content to attract advert

subscriptions and by charging for online content and the adoption of new media technologies to ease the operations of the revenue departments.

Regarding the prospects of traditional newspapers, data indicate that a lot of variables – both intrinsic and extrinsic to the newspaper industry – will have an influence. These factors include stiffer competition for revenue, low Internet penetration/access in Nigeria, cost of data, electricity challenges, technical issues with the website and economic changes. All these combine to create the picture of an uncertain future with the envisaged worst scenario being the ultimate extinction of the traditional newspaper. Nevertheless, there are also some potentially positive factors such as the fact that Nigeria is yet to realise her full Internet penetration potential as well as the fact that the hardcopy potential in the country is apparently yet to be fully explored. The newspapers have generally responded to all this by striving continuously to deal with emerging challenges, the strengthening of their hardcopy and softcopy competitiveness, and with the diversification of revenue sources beyond the core newspaper business. They do all these to ensure today's competitive viability and with an eye on tomorrow and its uncertainties.

Interestingly, one trend that remains stoic in the study is the similar viewpoints expressed by the focus group discussants on the influence of new media technologies on their media culture and consumption experience. For instance, the discussants agree that the disruptive impact of new media technologies is changing their mode of access, engagement and consumption of the Nigerian newspapers. They also feel that the hardcopy publication is relevant and should continue to

exist, even though with the integration of new media technologies for continuous improvements. For the discussants, it is obvious that technology (online publication) may not replace hardcopy publication, but newspaper houses who use technology may replace those who do not. While the similarity could not readily be explained, it is arguably not unconnected with the fact that the study was conducted in the cities - a place adjudged cosmopolitan with pro-technology population. It could also be a generational trend. For instance, a closer look at the discussants' demographics indicates that 87.5% of them are within the age bracket 18 - 49 years. There is a possibility that their thoughts might run along similar lines. Finally, the similar responses from discussants across the 4 different places of FGD could be a possible pointer to the fact that the influence and activities of the new media technologies - including on media culture, consumption and management - cannot be overlooked.

## Chapter 6 Summary, Conclusion, Managerial Implications, Recommendations and Limitations

### Section 6.1 Summary

This study was undertaken against the background of the emergence of new media technologies and the challenges they present to the operations and, ultimately, the survival of traditional media, including the newspaper industry. Specifically, the research focused on the Nigerian newspaper sector with a view to dissecting how such challenges have unfolded among local operators in the country and how such newspaper managers have responded to such challenges.

The study was situated within the framework of Technological Determinism and Disruptive Technology theories. The research design involved using Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to collect data from selected newspaper managers and readers respectively. Data analysis followed a thematic approach.

The findings indicate that new media technologies are indispensable tools in the daily working life of newspaper organisations and their readers. Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, the Nigerian newspaper industry is feeling the disruptive impact of new media technologies in major areas of their operations including content, human resources, and revenue generation. These disruptive impacts appear to be strengthening, rather than weakening. The newspapers' responses to these challenges have become more creative – mainly through the

integration of new media technologies into their operations, the acquisition of relevant new skills, the reorganisation of their gatekeeping structure, the exploration of online revenue sources, the diversification of revenue sources beyond the core newspaper business and improvements in their content quality through an emphasis on factual, accurate as well as investigative and analytical reporting. These are issues that had hitherto posed huge ethical concerns for Nigerian journalism. The hybridization (integration) of the new and old media, as one of the coping strategies, strengthens the newspapers as they utilise the strengths of the new media to complement the weaknesses of the old. Nevertheless, the future of the Nigerian newspaper industry in the face of new media disruption will continue to be influenced by some intrinsic and extrinsic factors which include stiffer competition for revenue, Internet penetration/access in Nigeria, cost of data, electricity infrastructure and economic changes. Moving forward, newspaper managers still have some latitude to secure the future of the industry given the untapped potential of the industry both in the traditional and online business.

## Section 6.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it may be concluded that fears about the fate of the traditional newspaper following the advent of new media technologies are not unfounded. While no one is yet completely sure of what all this will ultimately entail for the traditional newspaper – death or survival – the bottom line remains that fundamental changes are taking place. This is the basis of the concept “disruptive technologies” as employed for new media hardware and software in this study.

Hardware and software impose disruptions, a radical shift altering existing practices.

In the Nigerian newspaper industry, signs of these disruptions have become visible. This fact substantially supports the most important hypothesis underpinning this research, which is that the advent of new media technology has a potential to unsettle practices, priorities and ethos in the Nigerian newspaper industry, as has also been experienced in other countries. As is evident from the literature, the study conceptualises new media as a global phenomenon capable of replicating its effects from one area to the next on a global level. Thus, similar effects are felt across the world in revenue shortfall, due to reduced circulation and advertisement subscription.

From the findings, Nigerian newspapers are clearly responding to the problem in several ways such as acquiring new media technologies, equipping their workers with new media skills, and restructuring their operation and adapting it to the imperative of new media technologies. Nonetheless, it is obvious that they will meet further challenges and opportunities as Internet penetration increases in the country. Western media organisations have continued to respond in some more radical ways, through journalistic co-operatives, mergers and acquisitions. Evidently, the industry in Nigeria is yet to embrace this business model, which nevertheless remains a possibly viable option that newspapers in the country may choose to embrace in the future. Again, this supports one of the assumptions of this thesis, which is that Nigerian newspapers still have other options yet to be

explored. They could, for example, consider journalistic co-operatives, mergers and conglomeration. Newspapers in Nigeria seem to be conservative, if not hesitant, in their responses to the current situation. The potential problem with such a monopoly-oriented capitalistic model has already been pointed out earlier.

However, to further localize this scenario of disruption to the specifics of the Nigerian newspaper environment, recourse needs be made to “techno-human dynamism” – a construct conceptualised by the researcher (see section 3.6.4) to integrate the positions of Technological Determinism, Disruptive Technology, and Diffusion of Innovations theories so that a working model emerges. The model accommodates and merges the technological (material) and human (cultural) dimensions of technology into an integrative whole where technology becomes primarily a cultural phenomenon which can be realised and sustained only within the social sphere. This approach, it is argued, presents a more complete and more dynamic construction of technology and which helps for a deeper understanding of its effect. Thus, from the perspective of this approach, an innovation such as new media, in its unfolding in a clime like Nigeria, is necessarily both enabled and delimited by its social environment.

How is this disruptive impact of new media unfolding in Nigeria in view of her social strictures? First, it is relevant to emphasise that the Nigerian newspaper industry has its own experience of massive decrease in sales that had begun already before the Internet era. Commentators like Egbochukwu (2013) have rightly observed that this decrease had been so pronounced that many newspapers could not survive and



many that are surviving are struggling to remain afloat. Therefore, in Egbochukwu's view, the role of new media in whatever bad fortune confronting newspapers in Nigeria is being exaggerated. However, this is not to discredit the judgment of media managers interviewed in this study to the effect that they have lost circulation and advert revenues due to new media disruptions. Nonetheless, it would be more appropriate to argue that the present difficulty is a function of both new media technologies and other systemic factors that had been detrimental to newspaper circulation. These would include growing poverty and penetration of traditional alternatives of radio and television especially from the 1970s onwards (Daramola, 2003; Egbochukwu, 2013). The import of this reality is that newspaper managers, in reacting to the current threat faced by newspapers, should factor in these variables in order to appropriately deal with the problem. For instance, in regard to poverty, free online content may prove a more viable alternative than putting them up for subscription. The *Daily Trust* MD, who said his paper sold some of its online content, still admitted that such could be counter-productive. The fact that poverty was a factor in the decline of hardcopy sales means that the online alternative would not solve the problem without dealing with the poverty hindrance. Nonetheless, based on the admission of the FGD discussants that they still find online reading cheaper, newspapers in Nigeria are in a position to harness this opportunity offered by new media disruption. Similarly, the fact that alternatives to newspapers such as radio and television contributed to the lessening in hardcopy newspaper circulation would mean that newspapers which are able to leverage convergence features of new media may emerge winners in the unfolding disruption given that they now have an opportunity to present their content in

formats that will appeal to those whose news consumption habit favours radio and TV. All newspaper managers interviewed mentioned that they are already participating in at least some of these multimedia practices. The study found that this was especially to fro the *Daily Trust*.

Furthermore, while Internet penetration is rising quickly, about 35% of the Nigerian population are yet to be connected, largely due to low income. Also, statistics show that more than half of the connected people can hardly afford data regularly (Some of the FGD discussants admitted their difficulty in data purchase as arising from lack of money.) Consequently, new media disruption – from the perspective of both the challenges and opportunity it represents – is yet to be fully realised in the country. According to Christensen (1997), disruption is a function of acceptance of a novel (disruptive) technology by increasing the number of consumers in a market, such an older approach to service delivery becomes increasingly less preferable. As far as the newspaper market in Nigeria is concerned, the impact of new media is still emerging vis-à-vis the experience of the West where penetration is far higher, also due to higher incomes. Thus, as envisaged by the Techno-Human Dynamism Model, Nigeria's socio-economic reality permeates the development of new media technologies and contributes significantly to shaping their impact.

Another important social variable that is shaping disruption in Nigeria is that Internet adoption, for now, is concentrated among the younger population who traditionally do not constitute the bulk of the newspaper reading population. Data has continuously shown that readership has largely been found more among people

of approximately above 40 years (Eze, 2017). Admittedly, this demographic element would impose itself on the disruption process, as new media would tend to have a less unsettling impact on hardcopy circulation, but at the same time would offer an opportunity for exploring the Internet-savvy young market through niche strategies. Therefore, the future may belong to newspapers who are able to exploit this demographic reality of the Internet sector, especially considering the fact that Nigeria's population is generally dominated by young people. Thus, pursuing news content that will be of interest to these young audience members will go a long way in creating business opportunities as disruption unfolds. For example, young people of secondary and tertiary school age are usually in need of news related to their school calendar, examinations, admissions, scholarships and campus activities, which they often obtain via websites dedicated to such news. Newspapers may target such readers through an editorial policy that pays sufficient attention to such reports. This way, they would be responding appropriately to disruption as peculiarly unfolding in the market they serve.

Similarly, the gender variable is also relevant in shaping the unfolding of new media disruption. The Internet may represent an opportunity for widening the readership market through gender integration. Traditionally, women constitute a very small proportion of newspaper readers in Nigeria (Edegoh *et al.*, 2015). Cultural issues also would dissuade them from benefitting from free reading at newsstands through which many urban dwellers circumvent economic hindrances to newspaper consumption. It is still seen as irresponsible for a woman to frequent newsstands for purposes of newspaper reading. However, with gender composition of Internet

access and use in the country almost balanced, this represents a viable platform for reaching the hitherto excluded female audience. Content involving fashion news, social events news and similar subjects that have proven to hold women's interests will be strategic here. Christensen (1997) observes that disruption essentially occurs because leading companies concentrate all their energy servicing existing mainstream customers, thus allowing smaller companies to target peripheral customers using a novel technology which features suit their (customers') specific needs. Thus, this erstwhile novel technology ultimately becomes the mainstream market standard. Newspapers concentrating all their energy on retaining male readers (who currently constitute the mainstream and more profitable customers) might thus risk being toppled by those competitors integrating female readers using the Internet.

As stated in chapter 5, Nigeria's hardcopy potentials are not fully tapped due to illiteracy and infrastructural deficits that affect circulation. Some of the discussants emphasised that accessing hardcopies is sometimes also prohibited due to geographic distances involved. While the discussants in this study are all urban dwellers, the full manifestation of this problem is found in rural areas. This situation will affect how new media disruption unfolds in the country as newspapers may explore strategies to improve their hardcopy reach while also seeking to use online platforms to serve this potentially excluded segment. Gaining or losing in this disruption process will be determined partly by whether and how a newspaper responds to these country- and culture-specific situations.

Furthermore, political and legal circumstances, especially as related to press freedom, are also very likely to shape disruption in the Nigerian newspaper industry. Nigeria ranks low in World Press Freedom Index (Reporters Without Borders, 2018), and this has been a continuous occurrence. Definitely, gains have been made in this regard since return of civil rule in the country in 1999, but these have been generally adjudged as unsatisfactory (Daramola, 2013; Adedeji, 2009). This situation affords opportunities for citizen journalists, many of them operating anonymously, to report more freely than their traditional counterparts, thus potentially gaining advantage in credibility perception (Daramola, 2013). This threat to the newspaper establishment is very real irrespective of the equally persuasive argument that new media's gateless nature carries at least some credibility baggage (McQuail, 2010). Added to this is the fact that some of the leading newspapers in Nigeria are owned by politicians (e.g. two of those selected for this research – *The Sun* and *The Nation* – are owned by leading politicians of the ruling All Progressives Congress, APC). Such political connections are an important factor possibly undermining credibility. So the triple factors of law, politics and ownership will tend to sharpen the disruptive power of new media, as peripheral players – including citizen journalists – have more leeway to upstage the mainstream players by leveraging their potential credibility perception advantage.

On the whole, and in line with the integrative approach of the Techno-Human Dynamism Model applied, new media disruption in the Nigerian newspaper industry will unfold only as realised in the complex social whole, of which technology is only a component. Other components of this social whole include

politics, law, ownership, culture and demographics amongst all other dimensions of the social system.

To this extent, one important point that emerges from this study is that new media's disruptive impact on the Nigerian newspaper industry ought to be viewed not via any blanket application of the narrative of "disruption" originating from the West (given the differences in human/cultural variables between the two spheres). Thus, although there is no doubt that new media technologies constitute a disruptive element which upsets the old order while dictating a new order in line with the arguments of TD and DT theories (King and Baatartogtokh, 2015; Miles, 2012), it is to be concluded that the specifics of their impact on Nigerian newspapers do differ, at least in terms of how much it may be affecting sales and revenue.

Hence, the disruptive effects of new media technologies on newspapers in the West – and indeed elsewhere – are not the same as the disruptive effects of new media technologies on newspapers in Nigeria – both in nature and extent. It may only be a matter of time for the experiences to become identical, or it may never happen at all – though this is very unlikely. For now, managerial approaches must reckon with local specifics to avoid giving the wrong response to the right question. Questions must be identified properly in order to make the right answers possible. Questions of hardcopy, for instance, should not be mistaken for Internet questions. This conclusion aligns with one of the hypotheses underlying this study, which is that given that new media technologies are still much more an emerging phenomenon

in Nigeria than they are in the West, some of the challenges currently facing the newspaper sector in the country are not solely attributable to new media technologies. On the other hand, those challenges would have aggravated the burden of the new media-related challenges since their impact is on the revenue fortunes of the newspapers.

Nonetheless, the experience of the West ought to be a signal to the Nigerian newspaper industry that a paradigm shift has become unavoidable. The globalisation effect implies that no nation or people may remain isolated from a global reality for long. The reality of the threat of displacement of the hardcopy by the softcopy, thus summons Nigerian newspaper managers to a bolder, more innovative and more dynamic piloting of the affairs of newspapers individually and collectively as reflected in the recommendations below (section 6.4).

### **Section 6.3 Managerial Implications of Study**

The findings and conclusions of this study have discrete managerial implications for the Nigerian newspaper industry. The technological question facing newspaper management before has been merely the question of which technology to adopt to improve the delivery capacity of a newspaper. Today, all that has changed with the advent of new media technologies. The question these days is no longer just about adopting a technology but also about how best to combat a “hostile” technology i.e. online technologies. In other words, newspaper managers now have to deal with a novel technology which is proving both potentially beneficial and potentially detrimental. And since this technology is relevant in all aspects of newspaper

business – editorial, administration and marketing - the question it poses permeates all of these aspects.

Most importantly, this question touches on the very life, the very survival of hardcopy newspapers as they are traditionally known. It is a question of survival and it is this issue that newspaper managers in Nigeria are summoned to face in the current dispensation. To this extent, newspaper management can be said to be concerned mainly with facing the new media question. Stated differently, managing the benefits and threats arising from new media technologies has become a critical component of newspaper (media) management. Thus, managing a newspaper today demands a new kind of skill, a new kind of initiative, a new kind of vision, a new kind of planning and a new kind of execution. Already, some newspaper managers are striving towards these: they insist and train their workers in digital skills; investigative rather than armchair reporting is insisted on; they have become more interpretative and analytical to gain readers' trust; ethical journalism is brought to the fore, etc. The newspaper industry seems to have realised that it cannot be business as usual anymore as they try to respond to the realities of new media technologies.

#### Section 6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher finds the following recommendations relevant:

- i. Newspapers in Nigeria should strive to optimally integrate relevant new media technologies that are reshaping the modern newspaper industry.



They should adjust to the intervening technological reality through skills development in the relevant technologies.

- ii. Besides technological solutions, Nigerian newspapers should explore other revenue streams to strengthen and boost their chances of survival. They should consider options that have worked elsewhere, such as resource sharing. By sharing resources and enhancing scale, these newspaper organizations may be able to offer different prospects for investors, as well as gain the capacity to flourish in a progressively digital world.
- iii. As interpretative and analytical journalistic practices are critical to earning newspaper readers' trust and confidence, the Nigerian newspapers management should adopt strategies and creatively transfer their investigative credibility to their online spaces. One possible way of achieving this is by forming journalistic co-operatives just like *Der Spiegel*, *The Guardian* and *The Washington Post* have done at times with their investigative units. Journalistic co-operatives would enable the Nigerian newspaper houses to form a pool where resources, information and personnel could be mobilized to take up and deeply investigate high-profile cases. Such could be published online and help drive readers' traffic to the newspapers' online platforms.
- iv. While the challenges represented by new media technologies to newspapers is a global phenomenon, Nigerian newspapers should still consider the local

reality as they pursue solutions. This is in line with the need to marry technological applications with the actual human condition - “techno-human dynamism”. Hence, they need to act methodically, employing whatever relevant data available in making assessments, predictions and decisions.

- v. There is a need for stakeholders in the Nigerian newspaper industry to work towards development and continuous updating of databases of newspaper operations in the country. This is largely lacking for now, especially with regard to circulation and advert subscription figures (Eze, 2017). Such data are critical to managerial actions particularly in view of the current precarious state of the industry.
- vi. Newspaper business activity is one that is continuously evolving. Therefore, it is crucial to continuously change and update the curriculum for teaching journalism in order to make students and practitioners fit for the changed and changing communication situation and media practices within the newspaper business.
- vii. A repetition of this study using newspapers different from those employed in this study may be necessary. There are many other national newspapers with circulation strengths in different regions of the country such as *The Punch*, *The Tribune*, *Daily Independent*, *The Guardian* and *Vanguard* among others which, when studied, will importantly offer further insight and

possibly help validate some of the findings made here or add additional ones.

- viii. Similar studies could also be carried out in other sub-Saharan African countries like Ghana that share similar political, economic and cultural experiences with Nigeria. They could provide a set of comparative data that will further an understanding of the challenges of new media technologies on the management of the newspaper industry, and might possibly also be applicable to these countries.
- ix. A different approach in methodology may benefit further investigation of managerial responses of Nigerian newspapers to the challenges of new media technologies for hardcopy. Hence, it is suggested that studies using quantitative designs could be undertaken on this subject as a way of further validating the findings of this study. Similarly, content analysis methodology may also be integrated in similar studies for assessing any possible impact of new media technologies on content.

### Section 6.5 Limitations

Three factors present limitations to this research. First is the paucity of data on newspaper sales and advert subscriptions over the years in Nigeria. Availability of such data would have improved precision in assessing the challenges of new media for the newspaper industry in Nigeria. Hence, the researcher has made a recommendation for such databases to be developed or improved upon.

Secondly, the number and category of newspapers (i.e. national newspapers) chosen for the study may have been restrictive. The Nigerian newspaper industry is made up of many newspapers across different categories – national, regional, state, community and even organizational newspapers. While national newspapers alone may not precisely reflect the current situation in the sector, the researcher is however of the belief that since this category of papers constitute the mainstream (in terms of circulation and share of advert revenue), they may make for fair representation of the local industry.

Thirdly, it is the researcher's opinion that a study of this nature could be further enriched by integrating a content analysis of the newspapers to determine the possible impact of new media technologies on their content. The researcher merely relied on the responses of the newspaper managers for this set of data, whereas content analysis might have made for greater objectivity. For this reason, the researcher recommends such an approach in future studies.

## Section 6.6 Future Work

This research project marks the starting point of the researcher's long-term research goal of exploring the field of study of new media, disruptive technologies and media management. Ultimately, a future research project could focus on a cross-cultural and comparative study of technological impacts on the management of various traditional media.

Specifically, future research work could be undertaken in the following areas:

- i. Examining other (additional) Nigerian national newspapers such as *The Punch, Tribune, Daily Independent, The Guardian* and *Vanguard* to unpack the managerial experience, as well as generate further insights that will potentially validate some of the findings made here.
- ii. Interrogating the ethical implications of economic and revenue diversification strategies of media organizations for media practice and management.
- iii. Exploring the situation in Nigerian regional, community and non-national newspapers with respect to their experience with new media technologies and the nature of their coping strategies.
- iv. Conducting comparative studies showing the media management situation in Nigeria in relation to its counterparts in Asia and Europe.
- v. Unpack the remote and immediate factors of the media culture that influence the extent of female patronage and consumption of media products.

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## Appendix 1: Newspaper Managers' Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Mode of Interview (Face-to-face, phone, online): \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

My name is Nelson Obinna Omenugha, a current full time doctoral student of the School of Film and TV Art, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China. I am carrying out a research on **Media Management and Disruptive Technology: The Nigerian Newspaper Industry Today**. Due to the importance of your organization, I selected your newspaper as one of my respondents. Please kindly assist my research effort by sparing some time to participate in this proposed interview session. By answering the questions below, you voluntarily consent to partake in this research and appreciate that answers supplied are strictly for academic purpose and with the assurance of utmost confidentiality. You are also aware that this interview would be recorded. Before using any data collected through the interview, the researcher will share the final version of the interview with you in writing and ask for your consent to use this data in his research. At any time during the interview process, you may withdraw your consent and your data will be deleted. Thank you very much for your help in advance.

Was a follow up transcript review sent to the respondents as promised in the introductory letter above?

RESEARCHER

S/N	QUESTIONS
1.	<p><b>In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <p><i>a. Whether the respondents think the Internet has had impact on the</i></p>

	<p><i>operations of their newspaper house</i></p> <p><i>b. The nature of this impact – advantageous or disadvantageous</i></p> <p><i>c. Its extent – whether it has been routine and perhaps negligible or drastic and unsettling</i></p> <p><i>d. How this impact has manifested in the various aspects of the operations – administration, editorial (content), revenue/finance, manpower etc.</i></p>
2.	<p><b>What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <p><i>a. Whether the respondent thinks his/her organisation is responding to the challenges</i></p> <p><i>b. The extent this response has been institutionalised i.e. entrenched in the organisation's policy routine</i></p> <p><i>c. The nature of this response precisely and with reference to the various aspects of the operations such as</i></p> <p><i>i. administration</i></p> <p><i>ii. content</i></p> <p><i>iii. revenue</i></p> <p><i>iv. law/ethics etc.</i></p>
3.	<p><b>Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <p><i>a. Whether the respondent believes that his/her organisation has been successful in dealing with the challenges</i></p> <p><i>b. The precise nature of this success</i></p> <p><i>c. How this success has manifested in the various aspects of the operation</i></p> <p><i>d. Which aspect benefitted more and which benefitted less</i></p>
4.	<p><b>In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing</b></p>

	<p><b>with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a. Whether the respondent believes that his/her organisation requires to do more in dealing with the challenges</i></li> <li><i>b. In what areas this requirement exists</i></li> <li><i>c. The reason for this apparent shortcoming</i></li> </ul>
5.	<p><b>What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a. What the respondent believes his/her organisation should do to guarantee its future in the face of the unfolding impact of the Internet</i></li> <li><i>b. How achievable the respondent thinks this response is</i></li> <li><i>c. Whether he/she believes the organisation is on the way to achieving this</i></li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?</b></p> <p>The researcher will probe for and possibly raise follow-up questions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a. How the judges generally the managerial response of the industry believes to the challenges</i></li> <li><i>b. Whether the industry is on the right track</i></li> <li><i>c. What could be the ultimate fate of the industry in the face of the challenges</i></li> </ul>



## Appendix 11: Newspaper Audiences' Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member:

Moderator:

Note taker:

Observer:

Duration of Discussion:

Start \_\_\_\_\_

End \_\_\_\_\_

### Characteristics of Participants

S/N	Age	Gender	Educational Level	Occupation
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

**Introduction:** Good day, my name is **Nelson Obinna Omenugha** and my colleague is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a doctoral student of the School of Film and TV Art, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, China. I am currently carrying out a research on **Media Management and Disruptive Technology: The Nigerian Newspaper Industry Today**. Please be free with your answers as your anonymity is guaranteed. Your responses will be used for academic purposes only. At any time you feel not to participate in this Focus Group Discussion, you may withdraw. Thank you very much for your help in advance.

**Group No.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**No. of Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conduct of the Discussion:**

I want to encourage everyone to participate in the discussion. No answer given is wrong or right; what is important is that everyone is free to raise all ideas/opinions that they think or know and in the way they perceive it. The discussion will go this way: when a question is raised, one person will start with contribution while others follow with their own contributions one after the other. I look forward to your generous cooperation. Thank you in anticipation.

1. Can you describe your newspaper reading habit?

***Probe for:***

- *Whether the respondents read newspapers.*
- *Their regularity of newspaper reading.*

2. How often do you buy newspapers?

***Probe for:***

- *Whether the respondents purchase newspapers.*
- *Their regularity of purchase.*

3. Can we describe your attitude to online newspapers?

***Probe for:***

- *Whether the respondents read online newspapers.*
- *How enthusiastic they are about reading them.*
- *Their regularity of reading them.*

4. As readers, how do you rate Nigerian newspapers in terms of their online performance?

***Probe for:***

- *Whether the respondents believe the newspapers are adopting the online trend.*
- *How successful they see the newspapers are in adopting this trend.*
- *Areas where they see the adoption is not going well.*

5. Can we now say generally that the Internet technology has helped Nigerian newspapers to improve on their delivery, based on your experience as a reader?

**Probe for:**

- *Whether the respondents, based on their reading experience, believe the Internet technology has improved newspapering in Nigeria.*
- *What these improvements are specifically.*

6. But do you think that there are areas requiring improvement; where they can do more to provide better reading experience?

**Probe for:**

- *Whether the respondents think there are areas for improvement.*
- *The precise areas where this improvement is believed to be needed.*

7. In view of your experience as a reader, is hardcopy still relevant; would you say that newspapers should continue to give us hardcopy; should hardcopies remain?

**Probe for:**

- *Whether the respondents think the hardcopy is still relevant.*
- *Their reasons for thinking so or thinking otherwise.*

8. If you are a reader of online newspaper, has the online experience affected the extent you might want to buy or read physical newspaper?

**Probe for:**

- *Whether the respondents think their ability to access newspapers online has affected their hardcopy purchase.*
- *The extent of this effect.*

## Appendix 111: Newspaper Managers' Key Informant Interview (KII) Transcripts

### 1a.

**Name of Interviewee:** Victor Ifijeh

**Designation:** MD/Editor-in-Chief, *The Nation*

**Response received on:** June 26, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

Well the nature of the impact has to do with, number one which is positive; the expansion of our brand and our products because we now do print, online with the website and the social media. We reach out to more people so that's very positive, although that also has its own negative side. If people can read you online and social media, they probably don't need to buy print copy. Again, we are a global brand based on the new media because people can read us from anywhere in the world, so that's very positive, but generally, the disadvantage is that the print copy that brings more money is not selling as before. The rate of purchase has gone down and advertisement isn't what it used to be. More online platforms are competing with us even for the advert budget that used to be only for print and broadcast. Now it has to be broadcast, printing and digital.

So, basically, the Internet has completely affected our operations. The nature and intensity of competition have been altered, and we just have to device means of coping.

**So in view of all this, would you describe the challenge posed by new media to your operation as drastic and unsettling?**

I think it is drastic and unsettling, because you can see that copy sales are going down, advert sales are not as much as they used to be and copy sales used to be very critical. I mean they are one of the main sources of our revenue and advertisement. So the impact is critical, it's unsettling because we are not sure what's going to happen. I mean how sure are we that after investing so much money to buy ink and print copies, people are going to buy?

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

As the MD, I think I am in a position to speak on the various departments of our operation. Firstly, administration; this digital policy and awareness is communicated to everybody (in our firm). Every staff (member) must be new media-compliant. It is compulsory and even at the point of recruiting; we ensure that applicants have the skills.

It has compelled us to retrain our staff to be able to cope with the new demands of new media because it requires new skills to be able to cope. (For instance), typically press statement will be issued before, but now even a tweet can become a story, so every reporter needs to understand how that works. You have to have people on Facebook to be able to get information, and even right now, we recruit and

emphasise that they are Internet-literate. We realize now that story telling is more than just text. It can come in digital form, analytical forms in all kinds of options.

So in terms of manpower, as much as possible, we do not employ analogue staff anymore and for those that are already in the system, they need to step up their knowledge about new media. We have trained our staff. We are sending them for both internal and external trainings. We are reviewing how we operate. We have a digital first policy. We are expanding our offerings and we now produce videos and so many other things. We are very active on social media.

In terms of readership, we have other platforms where people can read us. So if they can't read us in print, they can read us on the website, they can read us on social media platforms. Again, the new media has heightened the need for speed, to be the first with the news. While we try to catch up with this trend, we are nevertheless not unmindful of its pitfalls in terms of professionalism, law and ethics. This is because we are a very responsible organization. We ensure that our staffs operate within the laws and ethics of the profession. So we don't just publish things without recourse to balance and fairness. We confirm whatever we get, we don't just get stories and run with it, we are conscious of not libelling anybody. In this era of speedy delivery of content, one may easily err in this respect.

Importantly, use of Internet has been institutionalised in our newspaper as the bedrock of operation. Like I mentioned earlier, because we have a digital policy which is the basis of our operation, we organise training for staff across the country.

The training manager and I have travelled round some of our regional offices. We have repeated this training, and we keep emphasizing to people that they need to understand how online operation works. You cannot be reporting without knowing what is online and how to respond to it.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I think we have done well in terms of being able to interface with the public. That is, we can reach widely now to the extent that when people want to advertise, they go on our website and find a way to reach us. When they have information, they can get across to us so I think in terms of our ability to interface with the public we have been really successful. The new media platform is a growing area and we are doing our best to know, master it and flow with the changes, realizing that the public that we used to serve solely through the print need information through all possible platforms.

So, basically I think we are on the right track. It is all about adapting to the new trend, new ways of doing things. We need to think with the time. We also need to think out of the box, be creative and innovative to make the best of the opportunities of today while as much as possible surmounting the challenges. This is what we have to do to remain relevant and be successful.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Yes we can do much more and we are doing so. This is especially with regard to acquiring the requisite skills. Right now, our team is largely made up of traditional journalists who need new orientation and rigorous trainings.

We also have to acquire new gadgets like we recently did by buying cameras and other recording gadgets for the online department. That is basically what I think we should be doing by way of improvement. I believe that it took time for the management to come to this realization and many staff (members) are reluctant to accept the change that has come up in the industry.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

We are surely on the way, and I think we are running as fast as we can so that we are not left behind. It is now tougher, as I said earlier, but then tough tasks require more effective strategy. The only way forward is to keep improving, keep strategizing and re-strategizing, keep pace with the unfolding development. I believe this is all we are doing right now.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

I would say that initially we were in a denial mode. We were not paying enough attention to the rapid changes in the industry. However, now we have started



paying attention, we appear to be on the right track. But somehow, generally, it's still a bit slow. We need to move as fast as possible. We need to understand the new dynamics of doing media. Media has gone beyond just producing a copy or a radio show, it has gotten to a phase where it has become more interactive, where you need to engage with the readers, with the viewers and get their feedbacks and incorporate (this) in your content.

I think we are on the right track (now) because virtually every organization that used to be very traditional has gone digital in one way or the other. We are all at different stages of our digital operations, but the signs are there that we will catch up. We have realized that our existence will depend on how much we are able to simultaneously develop the print and the online platforms.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in the sub-Saharan Africa?**

I think it is basically the same. The difference, however, lies in the vast differences in the economic climate here and some other parts of the world. The bad economic situation in the sub-Saharan Africa may be worsening the challenge we have already (from the Internet). But I think eventually, the globalisation effect will ensure that the future of hardcopy newspaper here does not significantly differ from what it will be elsewhere.

In Nigeria in particular, we still have more daily newspapers than other countries, though our circulation figures are very low compared to our population. Copy sales

will continue to decrease and the risk we run is that the cost of production may make the unit cost price unaffordable to both media owners and buyers.

**1b.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Gbenga Omotosho

**Designation:** Managing Editor, *The Nation*

**Response received on:** June 26, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

Yes, I think it has had an impact to the extent that first and foremost our only product before was a print platform, but now, we have an online platform, including the websites and the social media handles like Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. So we are sending out information on all these platforms. It has also impacted because unlike before that the people relied on printed newspaper for information, now they can get news on all these platforms. So it has affected the rate at which people buy copies, and to that extent, it has also affected the way we operate. Journalists can now get information from different sources beyond press statement and all those things.

Editorially, like I've mentioned, it has affected our reach, but at the same time it has provided means for people to read us. It has also made us to get more information than we used to have.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

Yes, I think we are responding to the extent that so many years ago when we had an online department it was just a unit of the IT department, but now that's changed. We now have a full online department that is separate from the IT department. We have staff as many as eight and more support staff so we are not only publishing on the website, we publish on social media, and we produce videos. We hold trainings for our staff, we even have an online first policy which means that for every reporter in this organization, when a story breaks and it's a routine story, it has to get to the online department first. We are very conscious of the importance of the new media and the need to respond as fast as we should.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

We are aware and we are taking steps. We can't say we have done all we need to do. The new media is an evolving platform and we doing our best to be up-to-date.

In regard to editorial matters, our staff are new media compliant. They use it as much as possible. They get their stories from different media platforms and they are able to write more than the routine reports as it used to be the case.

How it has manifested is that our operations are more diverse. We are now more of a multimedia company than a mono product company. People can read us on all

these platforms and like I said we are exploring the revenue options, we are retraining our staff.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I think virtually in all areas. Like I stated earlier, the new media is an evolving sphere. We keep learning, we keep growing, we keep adapting. This adaptation and learning occurs in all departments of our operations; news gathering, processing and dissemination. It is an all-round thing basically. So, in all areas, I feel there is room for improvement because things are changing quickly every day, more new media possibilities are developing and everyone that works with new media ought to adapt to these possibilities continuously.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

We must keep abreast of the developments in new media and respond appropriately. We must keep training our staff and ensure that only those who have the capacity to take us to the next level remain in the system. We must keep training and exposing our staff to what they need to know and keep up with the changing patterns.

These goals are achievable because our future depends on them. They are very achievable and they are doable. The most important thing is that we have set our

minds to ensure that we are up-to-date in that space and we will do anything to achieve it. We are working hard to find the right personnel to be able to do it.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

I think that the truth is that not everybody is going to survive. It's going to be survival of the fittest. A few are going to disappear because they are not going to have the financial capacity and know-how capacity to continue. Some of those which will survive will work with less staff and more capable personnel who are digital-compliant.

So, basically, I will say there is generally some good progress in the industry in terms of responding to the demands of this era. However, all fingers are not equal on this. Some newspaper organisations have proved to have more capacity to weather the storm than others. So, I think, like it obtains with any new phase, some players will survive in the new phase while others will go with the old phase. It is almost natural.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in the sub-Sahara Africa?**

I wouldn't know exactly what the situation is in other countries in this region of the world. But what I know is that what is happening in Nigeria in terms of circulation dwindling is also happening in countries like Ghana and Ivory Coast. I believe this is

virtually the situation everywhere. We all have our local specifics but I think basically we may be sharing a similar experience in some issues like the state of our newspaper sectors. I am sure the advent of new media is having a similar effect everywhere. So, I think the future of the hardcopy in Africa is tied to how well we are able to adapt to the new trend. We are not alone in this, other countries of the world are experiencing the change as well. So, we need to see how they respond to it and try to replicate it here, if possible.

For Nigeria specifically, we still have more daily newspapers than other countries (in the sub-Sahara Africa), though our circulation figures are very low compared to our population. Copy sales will continue to decrease and the risk we run is that the cost of production may make the unit cost price unaffordable to both media owners and buyers.

**1c.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Lekan Otufodunrin

**Designation:** Online Editor/ Rep. Marketing Manager, *The Nation*

**Response received on:** June 26, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

In one breath people don't buy papers like they used to buy. They don't advertise like they used to because of these other options they have. But the good thing is that even the online (newspaper) itself has a revenue base.

We earn some income from the online platforms but it's not significant yet. It is growing. We are hopeful and we are exploring all the revenue options that are available.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

We are trying to move with the tide. We are changing our tools from analogue to digital. We are learning new skills, we are acquiring new human resource capabilities. We are redefining our editorial policy so that the Internet will have a central place in it in terms of aiding our news gathering and news dissemination. We are also exploring other opportunities for making revenues through online platforms, particularly by offering our platforms for advert subscriptions. So, in a nutshell we are putting measures in place to make our operations conform to the emerging environment.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I would say we are trying to cope and we are making progress. It is both a short term and long term thing. Short term in that we are trying to make revenue today and stay afloat, and long term in that we are also thinking about the future with its uncertainties. We are aiming at remaining sustainable for as long as possible.

So, I would say that there is always room for doing more. We are trying to improve every day. And I believe we have made some notable progress in the area of getting our content online in order not to lose those readers that have migrated to the Internet. This way, we are also chasing after those advertisers who are increasingly taking their messages to the Internet.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I believe we need to do more in the area of acquiring the requisite equipment. These technologies continue to grow every moment and we need to keep pace with them. We need improved digital cameras, online software and we need to equip our reporters with gadgets like iPad and give those Internet connections to enable to work from wherever they are.

We also need to give more training to our staff. We are doing this already, but I feel we may need to improve on its regularity, it should happen more regularly if we are to keep up with the changing dynamics of newspapering in this edge.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

The way forward is simply to keep doing the right thing. This, as I have just explained, is to continue to address our areas of need just as equipment and human



capacity. When we must have done that, then we say hopeful that things will work out well for us.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

Our industry has done so well. I must make this commendation even at the risk of sounding immodest. This is considering our socio-economic peculiarities which affect a lot of things including crucially circulation. That newspapers are still operating in this country is a great credit to the managers of these establishments. There is no doubt about that.

With precise reference to how we are responding in this era, I would also give us a pass mark. I am not unaware of the fact that there is still much to be done, but so far so good. Our newspapers have succeeded in integrating new media platforms in their operations. Is there any serious newspaper in this country that does not publish online and updates its online news on hourly or even second basis? I seriously doubt this. So to that extent, I would say we are on the right path. We may not be there yet, but we shall surely get there.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa?**

Conditions differ from one part of the world to the other. Those of us in sub-Saharan Africa are burdened by bad economic climate, and which is inevitably affecting our

newspaper industries. Basically, you know that newspapers in the west, for instance, are much stronger than what you have in this part of the world, whether you are speaking in terms of circulation or revenue in general. We are still far behind, and this is due to differences in economic, political and cultural fortune.

What that may translate to is that our experiences in this new media era might differ. Perhaps, those of us in this region of the world may have to face tougher days than our counterparts over there due to these differences, particularly the economic ones. Our newspaper firms are quite small compared with the large and conglomerating outfits in the USA, France, Germany, Australia and so on and so forth. We do not have the large revenue base available to these western newspapers, so we are likely, other things being equal, to be worse hit by the negative impact of the new media. For us, therefore, the future will be determined by how much we are able to understand our peculiarities and respond based on them. On the final note, I think if we work hard we will survive.

**2a.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Bonaventure Melah

**Designation:** MD/Editor-in-Chief, *Daily Times*

**Response received on:** June 4, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

It has affected it in a number of ways, to be frank. Take for example, content/news or stories, if you prefer. Time was when all stories were collected through the day and reported the following day in the papers. Today, the news breaks on the go and you find that many of the print media organisations, including *Daily Times*, have had to create digital platforms. This is why we are more responsive in bringing the news as it breaks to an equally diversified spectrum of audience, especially the technology-savvy that rely on the internet for their news instead of just papers.

So with respect to readership, I can add that as well, it has become more diversified. But it something has their downsides because as I am sure you're aware, the digital customer has a short attention span as there are a lot of things on the Internet seeking his/her attention per time. So the reality is therefore that as a digital platform, you are competing against everything else on the Internet, media or not, for the attention of each reader. Hence, the goal is to position the brand so that it becomes a top priority for readers.

Generally, however, it (new media) has eased the process of information gathering as well. I mean a reporter in Kaduna (a city of historical, political and commercial significance in North-East Nigeria) can very easily mail a story to the editor in Lagos and the story will be live in a matter of minutes.

**But would you describe this impact of new media as drastic and unsettling?**

Drastic and unsettling? No. If anything, it has complimented an existing process in our experience of it for more efficiency. This is evident in what I told you a while ago regarding how the Internet is helping us in collecting news and processing it quickly.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

We are changing our ways of operation. For instance, we are beginning to work with digital equipment. As I said earlier, we now publish online and no more just print. We have also integrated online platforms such as email in our newsgathering operation. Our reporters now make use of email to file their reports. In the past we relied on less efficient and less convenient means including fax and telephone. Today, all that has changed.

So, on the whole, it is a matter of migrating from an old system to a new system. We are doing a lot to perfect this migration.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges that are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Yes we are. *Daily Times* is the oldest and most prestigious newspaper in Nigeria. But you see, all of that will be almost meaningless if we are not constantly reinventing ourselves and advancing with the times. One of such ways is by leveraging the opportunities availed us by the penetration of the Internet. You see, there is a latent potential for growth in digital media and we are aligned in order to maximise our chances. There are several outlets for news in this digital era, from WhatsApp to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, you name it, and we are plugged into all to ensure our market leadership.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I think these areas exists. Yes, there is always a room for improvement. However, it is a continuous thing. You continue to improve as you observe areas of improvement. I cannot sit here and tell you all we might need to do by way of improvement. It is an emerging thing, it is like trial and error. As we go we notice our deficiencies, we make mistakes and we try to address all those.

But if I must say something to you, I will admit that we need to do more in the area of equipping. We need to improve the capacity of our staff in line with the current digital trend.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

The media organisations of the future will be largely digital. We know this and have infused this awareness into everything: our strategies, people, policies etc. This way, we are building the future from each moment out.

We would continue to open up new vistas for our organisation by leveraging new media channels. It would also require innovations and disruptions to some extent on our part. But whatever we would, we are not letting go of the internet. This is very achievable and we are on course to achieving it already.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

Frankly, I would rate it above average. Is the industry on the right track? Surely, it is. It has reinvented itself a lot. The traditional media platforms – both print and electronic – were very quick to embrace the digital, hence they now have a strong synergy instead of playing catch-up.

There is a latent potential for growth in digital media. Indeed, the media companies of the future would be more digital than not. Newspapers, regardless, in my opinion, will continue to exist maybe for the next 20 to 30 years. Maybe for a longer time than that even. But I do not see them going into extinction.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa?**

I think if newspapers in other parts of the world have a future, then those in sub-Saharan Africa also have. There is no way this could be otherwise because we are into this together. We both suffer from reduction in revenues but probably to various extents. Basically, newspapers in other parts of the world have responded by making efforts to integrate the Internet. This is exactly what newspapers in this part of the globe are also doing. Go online you will read African newspapers, from South Africa, from Sierra Leone, from Nigeria, just the same way you read *New York Times* and *New Telegraph*. It is all the same response and I believe results will be similar with perhaps some differences here and there.

I also know that there are things they have started doing that we are not doing at the moment, but perhaps we will start doing later. For instance, in Nigeria in a couple of years for example, newspapers would be handed out for free with more focus on monetisation on the digital. In places like the UK/US this has already begun. Sooner than later.

**2b.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Sam Nzeh

**Designation:** Editor, *Daily Times*

**Response received on:** June 4, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

The Internet has fundamentally affected our operations. It has altered the way we operate. We now find it much easier to run our editorial operations amidst distance and pressure of time. Before now, it was definitely more difficult. Secondly, we now have the opportunity to reach more people, global audience as against those days when we were restricted just to our immediate geographical environment. This gives us added potential to strengthen our brand.

But in terms of disadvantages, the fact is that the competition is stiffer when it comes to securing the attention of the digital customer with the plethora of things seeking their attention on the Internet. So, the Internet has also intensified the competition. Many competitors that were not there before now have now come on board. It is definitely a challenge to us. So, just as the Internet has brought advantages and opportunities for us, it has also heralded corresponding disadvantages and challenges.



**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

We have ensured that our workers are skilled in the Internet and digital sense. This is what the time requires and we are putting this in place. We also make sure that we provide training opportunities for our personnel particularly the editorial personnel in order to equip them with the latest skills in new media journalism.

Another measure we are putting in place is to replace our analogue equipment with digital ones. We need this to be able to operate. We have also created an online desk headed by the online editor. His duty is to upload our stories online. He and his team ensures that we keep updating our content moment by moment. As news develop, we follow and report. The online desk team manage our entire online platforms including our social media platforms. They ensure that we are visible and active on these platforms.

With all these, I can say we are on the right track. We are not stopping here. We are growing. Each day we keep experimenting with new measures.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges that are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Yes, we have been. To a large extent, it is not a one-off but requires consistency because it is very easy to disrupt and displace anyone. So the goal is to remain consistent and to a very great extent, we are.

There is a competition to be the first with the news; to connect more to the people with the news; to be the most preferred. It exists and we are keen to win it. So, we are coping as much as I can say.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

We can always improve. There is no end to the race. As long as newspaper business remains, challenges and competitions will continue to push us to improve on what we do. That is it basically.

**Could you be more specific with the areas you may need to make this improvement?**

As I said, it is a continuous thing. Need for improvement keeps coming up in different areas and to different degrees. Once it comes up, we confront it as the specific case demands.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

The way forwards is simple and straightforward; study the time, understand it and flow with it. I think we have been doing this as an organisation. We try to see what others are doing (our competitors and even newspapers outside the country that do not compete with us), we try to replicate what they do and as well make our own

innovations. What we do are simply those things I have mentioned earlier regarding changing to digital operation, building our human capacity and so on.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

I would say that our industry has done well generally. It has not been easy at all. Times have been very hard, but we have been plodding on with successes here and there. But this is not to deny the obvious failures from time to time. Several newspapers have folded, I mean once very promising newspapers. You know them, I don't need to start naming them. Some are still publishing but merely standing on one leg. They are barely surviving. However, all this will not blur the fact that many others have been doing well and are looking sustainable in the far future.

Newspapers in Nigeria have responded well to the realities of the Internet age. This is no longer news. They are online, their content is updated, and they have integrated social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa?**

We have done well in this part of the world. Newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa cannot escape from the economic realities of their climes. In some other parts of the world, newspapers are better off, though they may have their own peculiar difficulties.

Be that as it may, I believe we in Nigeria are responding well to the situation we have on our hand. If newspapers in other countries do the same thing, if they respond as their local situation demands, then I think they will survive if others survive.

**2c.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Gbenga Adeosun

**Designation:** Marketing Manager, *Daily Times*

**Response received on:** June 4, 2018

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

The Internet has affected us, no doubt. We are now a fusion of print and electronic process of mass communication. We now publish online as well as hardcopies. This is the most visible change to an outside observer.

In my own area, which is marketing, the Internet has affected our fortune and the way we work. We now have to pursue Internet commercials because a large chunk of advert money has moved online and I think more is moving. At the same time, getting advert subscriptions both for our hardcopy and online editions is becoming more difficult due to the increasing competition brought about by the Internet. I think this basically sums up my experience here.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

We have done a lot. It is everything, no one aspect is untouched: editorial, admin, finances even. But I'd say we have coped more with respect to content and maybe admin, it is really hard to tell. In terms of marketing, we are still may be struggling a bit. We are yet to be able to see that we are breaking even, that we now earn as much as we should. No, there is still a long way ahead.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges that are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

All I can say is that we have earned a pass mark. We have been able to stay afloat in the face of the tumultuous changes. Everything does not depend on us. You do your own but external factors also determine the result you get. Take the economy, for instance, it can always dictate how much your strategy proves effective. This has always been our experience, but we can only do better.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

The challenges are multifaceted, so we require a dynamic response. We are doing that generally. We know we have to do more and we are trying to do that. There is no specific area we need to do this, all areas are affected, all areas are important. But let me say that we are very positive in our outlook. We do not just see challenges, but we see opportunities in the challenges as well. We appear to be

getting disadvantaged in the face of the increasing competition for readership and advertising subscriptions, yet there are opportunities embedded in the competition. It's not as much a shortcoming as it about a journey to winning a fair chunk of the market share.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

We just need to keep doing what we are doing and improving on them. The key is to remain consistent and inventive, nothing more nothing less.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

We have done well, I must confess. We have responded to the realities of the time rapidly. Just within the last decade, newspapers in Nigeria have completely adopted the online technologies, something that might have been unimagined before now. So, I would admit that we are moving in the right direction, even though we still have more to do to fully realise our potentials. We are a very big nation, sixth in the world in terms of population, so there is a huge potential for newspapers to thrive. We have a bright future, all we need is to keep moving in the right direction and keep being inventive.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa?**

I think I can talk only about Nigeria. I wouldn't like to engage in conjectures regarding these countries that I have never worked in their newspaper sectors. Nigeria has a vibrant newspaper industry. Like I said before, it is a market with huge potentials given our population and economic possibilities basically. Based on this, I would say that we have an auspicious future before us. We can do a lot if we are able to surmount our systemic problems of economic instability and literacy challenges. These are variables that affect our newspaper industry and add to the challenge posed by new media. These variables are also capable of limiting the extent some of the measures we are putting in place as per challenges posed by the Internet will yield results.

**3a.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Eric Osagie

**Designation:** MD/Editor-in-Chief, *The Sun*

**Location:** MD's office, The Sun Publishing Limited, Apapa, Lagos.

**Date:** January 17, 2018

**Time:** 2.10pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

The Internet is much here with us. The implication of this is that the online culture has become part of the operational architecture of these newspapers in their quest to hold their own in the face of the realities of the new media era. Thus, the content management culture in these establishments will ideally be a fusion of the traditional newspapering process and new media content generation and processing techniques.

With the new media technology, you have news everywhere. Once you have a handset, it doesn't matter the type of handset, they are bombarding you with news. So it affects your print circulation... The economy is there and the new media is there. They all exert their weight on media in Nigeria.

Also, the Internet has increased the rate of competition in this industry. We are now competing with not only our fellow newspapers but also with online outfits. And some of these online outfits are not being fair... (They) do not give us credit (when



they use our content); they are like vultures on our product. We send a reporter to a place as far as Kafanchan and he does a report and before you know it these blog sites have jumped on it. For example, the story we did on the woman impregnated by the son-in-law, they immediately copied the story and it is everywhere. They do not even give us credit, and nobody is paying us for that. And there is a proliferation of all kinds of blogs. All you need is your tablet and you wake up in the morning to see the newspaper and then you begin to take their interesting stories and share. So it is all part of the problem.

You can now see the extent of the problem we face. There is no doubt that the introduction of the Internet has affected the media, particularly the print media. Newspaper is part of the print media world. In all facets of operation it (new media) has affected it, ranging from production to distribution and market penetration... You will be right if you describe the situation as threatening. You are afraid and can't just say what may happen next. Notwithstanding, I will still admit that we have some gains to reap from the Internet, but these gains also come with great challenges.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

Basically, the operations of old and new media are the same... Whether new media or old media, they all feed on news. They are the same basically. All you just need is to have experts in those areas. We have an online editor who will now feed us on

trends in the business, how to make money (online), how to improve our rating and all that. It is complementary, the old and new media. So the measures we have put in place in summary are all about integrating new media operations in our traditional operations. The central element in all of this is news.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I believe we are. Even though nothing can be perfect, we have achieved some milestone by way of being able to gain large online readership. Our webpage [sunnewsonline.com](http://sunnewsonline.com) is one of the leading online news brands in this country. We are optimising other resources apart from website. Our social media platforms are all very vibrant. How else can you judge a media establishment as coping under the present circumstances? So, all I can say is that we are coping. Nonetheless, our problem is still in the area of earning enough revenue commensurate to the effort and creativity we are putting in. While hardcopy sales and advert subscription have significantly gone down, the online version has not effectively made up for the loss. All this comes down to what I said earlier about the Internet bringing more intense competition in the industry.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I feel we have so far paid our dues. We have successfully migrated to the digital platforms, new media platforms as proper with the current culture. What is remaining is for us to begin to reap our benefits. So, I reason that we still need to do

more in the area of revenue drive, in the area of optimising the revenue potentials of these platforms we have migrated to. We will keep on bringing up and experimenting with new ideas. There are some of them in the pipeline already, but I will not divulge them right now. They may be classified as what you may term trade secrets. When we start implementing them you will begin to see them.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

The way forward is to continue with our strategy of integrating the new media in our traditional way of newspaper business. It's as simple as doing what the time demands. However, one important policy thrust we have adopted is to explore investigative journalism. It is one way of doing things differently from the online news sources. We have an investigative desk headed by an experienced investigative reporter. Such reportage helps us to go beyond mere scratching the surface of the news which is what the online news sources typically do. This way we tend to gain some edge.

Again, we try to continue to pursue our policy of reporting what is of interest to the people we are reporting for. If you have a lot of people who are concerned about hunger and you are publishing PDP and APC (the two major political parties in Nigeria), they may not read. They won't buy... They may be apolitical. News is what concerns you. If there is an earthquake in Soviet Union and there is hunger in your backyard, they may not read (if you report) the Soviet Union (story).

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

I am of the opinion that we have done creditably well. However, we are burdened by the unfriendly economic environment. The economy is bad here and it is affecting us in a very bad way. The newspaper industry as a whole suffers a lot as a result of the current economic situation in the country. The business is very capital intensive, navigating it is so fragile. So things become so difficult once the economy makes any negative turn.

The economic difficulty is seriously affecting readership. Do they (readers) have the wherewithal? They may not have. It is also linked to poverty. Per capita income is low. The economy has not been what it used to be. When you have to make a decision as to whether to use 200 naira (52 cents) to buy a tuber of yam or to use it to buy a newspaper, then you know where the loyalty lies.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa?**

My earlier submission on poverty partly answers this question. Definitely, there is a world of difference between newspapers in the two parts of the world. One group is more buoyant, bigger and with larger readership while the other is just the opposite. This is a function of variations in the socio-economic conditions in the two climes.

Major newspapers in the west may be experiencing some tumult due to the advent of the Internet, yet, I am of the view that most of them are still more viable than what we have in Nigeria, for instance. I think with a better economy, half of our problem as industry here would have been solved. Here, we are fighting on two front. First, the disruptions brought about the Internet, and two, the bad economic climate under which we are operating. I believe that ultimately, the future of newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa will be decided not by new media alone, but also more importantly by our economic experience.

**3b.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Onuoha Ukeh

**Designation:** Editor *Daily Sun*

**Location:** Editor's office, The Sun Publishing Limited, Apapa, Lagos.

**Date:** January 23, 2019

**Time:** 3.10pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

Well, it is not that Internet or technology has a total negative effect. There are gains and these include the fact that you are able to expand your reach in an unlimited sense such that you can be read anywhere irrespective of distance. Before now, you were made to reckon with the challenges posed by distance and limited circulation logistics. All that is today, to a great extent, addressed by the Net. Of course, this

expanded reach potentially translates to more revenues. Two, the Internet has enhanced immediacy. When there is breaking news, while the hardcopy to be read tomorrow is being prepared, the online version breaks it, so people would know what happened.

On the other hand, one of the negative effects is in terms of readership because many people now read newspapers online, so the number of sales has dropped. But since *The Sun* is online, most of the stories are posted online and people go to read what they want to read and such people may not bother to buy the hardcopy, and that is a loss in revenue. Also, once you have broken a story the previous day through your online version, a lot of people may not see the reason to buy your hardcopy any longer. Therefore, it puts you under pressure to make what you would publish in the hardcopy tomorrow to be more detailed. This is the negative side. So, breaking news is no longer in the hardcopy unless when it is exclusive. But when it is a running story, if you don't handle it well, it becomes stale news. It also affects readership because some reader would say 'if I read it yesterday why buying a copy?' But the way you make up is that you now offer something extra beyond what you have on the Net. So, these are the two basic ways it affects us... you find a way to overcome it.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

Since the challenge is technology-based, you also make use of the technology i.e. the Internet (to confront the challenge). We have the hardcopy, *The Sun* is (also) online. While the hardcopy may lose some readership, you make up. Some people who go online can read. That means that your traffic will be high, so in terms of rating you will be up. So we try to make our online version efficient and informative. And since we have a background of hardcopy where you give the details and extra, so you do that online as well. So what you may lose in hardcopy you gain it there.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I think we are coping well absolutely. It is in the area of readership like I told you. We also make revenue online. It depends. There is nowhere in the world that circulation is static. Sometimes it goes up, sometimes it goes down depending on the variables. For instance, in Nigeria, if there is rain from morning till night, you know that it will affect sales that day. So, but all things being equal, it is going up. But in any case, no newspaper anywhere in the world survives on copy sales. That is not possible. So you need other streams of income, which is where advertisement comes in. That is why you have to diversify and do other things to get revenue, but in doing that, you should also know that it is the brand that matters, how strong it is, its credibility. That is what will help you in other streams of businesses.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Everything is evolving. You cannot say that you have done the best you can. We keep improving. You look at your online version and try to do things that will make it look more efficient: work on the speed, make sure the information you put out there is correct, that the quality is good. So we keep doing more.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

Instead of looking at it from the negative side, you look at it from the positive side and take something from it. Technology is not a minus, it helps you improve on what you do. So we employ it to do our job better. Now that we have our online version *Sun TV*, so we do some of the things a television station does. May be some time in the future we become a television station. We do news and we do interview and post the audio online. So you do not just read you also listen.

We have also created other platforms through which to project our brand. *The Sun Man of the Year* award is one of them. *The Sun Man of the Year* is to celebrate excellence. We broadcast *The Sun Man of the Year* online. Exactly when it is happening we stream it online, so you can go there and view it. As we give award we are also on the spot... so far nobody has faulted our award because we are very meticulous. That's shows you that *The Sun* is very credible.



**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

The Internet is a challenge but I don't think the hardcopy will die. It will continue to evolve because even when radio came, TV came, we said the hardcopy would die (but that did not happen). So it (the Internet) will only help the hardcopy to be better. The future is not too bleak. It is only for you to re-strategize, do what you should do to be seen as a serious brand, do things that will fetch you money in a credible way, and then the hardcopy will survive.

The thing is that just like in any other business, some establishments will come and go, some will stay and what we should know about business is that the management and the strategy are very important. If you don't get it right you will lose out. So some newspapers came and died and there are some that came and are still surviving and they are thriving. So it is for you to understand the business you are doing. Do the right thing and when you do the right thing you will continue to grow. The Nigerian newspaper industry is growing but that does not mean that some newspapers are not dying. And even tomorrow some new newspapers will join (the industry) but what will make the difference is the strategy you are using, the type of product you have, the strategy you are using, then the management of it. If you get it right you will be there.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Sahara Africa?**

The future is bright. As it is in Nigeria, so it is in Ghana, South Africa and all that. It may not be of the same magnitude because a lot of things are involved. But they are growing. If you go to South Africa, their newspapers are thriving. If you go to Kenya they are also thriving. It is a matter of quality. In some countries where they don't publish on Saturdays and Sundays, that is their own style. Then in Nigeria, you know that we publish everyday that is our own style. The overall thing is that the future is bright and that journalism in Africa is taken seriously even outside Africa. If CNN could say we are giving an award for African journalist, then it means that what we are doing is worth giving attention. It is for us the practitioners to do more so that the future will be brighter. In Africa, journalists are fearless. Someone once told me that he considers Nigerian journalists as fearless, sometimes the questions we ask the authorities will not happen in some developed countries. I feel strongly that the hardcopy will survive.

### **3c.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Nkiru Obeki

**Designation:** Business Development Manager, *The Sun*

**Location:** Business Development Manager's office, The Sun Publishing Limited, Apapa, Lagos.

**Date:** January 23, 2019

**Time:** 4.05pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

The digital media world has its advantages, it has its disadvantages. With the Internet, Facebook and all that, we could reach out to all our clients. We could send mails, send materials and the advantage of it is that it is easier and faster. Someone is in Abuja and has sent in a material to be used tomorrow. As I speak to you, I have downloaded it from my email and I have sent it to our production staff. They are working on the material and in less than 30 minutes time it will be ready and it will go for printing. So it is easier, it saves a lot of time. Most things we do these days are basically online. I can sit here and do what I want to do, send it online, send it through WhatsApp. So wherever I am, I can do the job. It is very very easy, I can say. But at the same time, the aspect of privacy, people getting your information, may constitute a challenge. Some people get some of the information you want to use for yourself. That is the area I have a bit of reservation. But in general it has enhanced the job.

(Also) We have a very drastic change because everybody can read on their phone. But the core corporate world still read the newspaper. They still go to the print. Irrespective of the fact that the youth now don't read hardcopies, they read on their phones. The corporate class still reads online, but they still need to know the details, so they still buy hardcopies. But before everybody bought but now I can say 60% buys, 40% reads only online. A lot of people are going online and that affects circulation but not drastically.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

In the marketing department, we are basically doing the same thing we know how to do best; marketing our brand, trying to convince advertisers to advertise with us and exploring other revenue windows. With new media nothing much has changed except that we have included online platforms in offer. We invite people to place ads not only in our hardcopy but also online. We have orientated our personnel on how to go about this. They now know, for instance, that to convince someone you need to tell the person of the large amount of traffic which our webpage drives, just as you need to tell them the extent of our circulation when it is about placing ads in the hardcopy.

Regarding the privacy issue I talked of, I think for us, we decided to have our private emails, we make sure that all our news and reports are properly documented, so you can't really get to it except if we post. Security measures have been put in place to ensure that outsiders cannot post on our online platform.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

We are managing the challenges. The business aspect, for me, has benefitted more from our attempt to respond to the new media realities. The Internet has helped a great deal in the sense that our materials for adverts are now sent faster and easier. Materials that are going for the next day publication are sent in time (today). But

before now, it took time, you have to give it two to three days. But nowadays you can send a material right away and get it published the following day. It's a good one. Once you are able to send the material on time, you get it used the following day. I think that is one of the aspects that I like most.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

In terms of that, you know challenges come on daily basis and as they come you take them on. When there is no issue, you don't think of how to tackle non-existent challenges, so when the challenges come you also find a way of going around them, getting the issues resolved with the technology that comes. For instance, technology came up with virus, it is the same technology that helps to solve the problem. So if there was no problem there wouldn't have been an antivirus to solve it.

You have scammers who want to post fake news. You have the problem of much fake news. What you do is to partner with solution providers to make sure that such problems are nipped in the bud.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

I really need to say this. The technology has its advantages and disadvantages. No matter how the technology is, I can bet you that the print will always be there for

reference purposes and archives. The aspect of the technology is quite alright, everybody is digital. But the disadvantages are far far more damaging. For example, there was a political campaign that was on and a rally was organised. All of a sudden they came up with the news that the leader of a faction of the OPC was killed and within five seconds it was all over the Internet. But the mainstream media decided to go for investigation to find out what happened really. We did our investigation and found out that there was really a clash between the APC and PDP during the rally and the man was hit and he didn't die. He was at a hospital and receiving treatment. As I speak to you now, he is hale and hearty. But the digital media had gone haywire that the man is dead. You carry fake news, they don't do investigative journalism. They just give you breaking news which can get the whole country panicky. That proper media investigation is not there, no balancing. That is one area that is damaging. There was a house that was in dispute. We got it from the Internet that a husband died, the wife got the property sold, and the children came and fight ensued which led to the house being burnt down. Before you knew it, the news was all over the place. Eventually we investigated, we got there quite alright the house was in dispute but it was not the house that got burnt. It was an unrelated fire incident.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

Hardcopy will survive. What is happening now is a phase... Eventually, people will begin to distrust the online media. The print will survive on the long run because people are not getting exactly what they should get from the digital media.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Saharan Africa?**

I don't think I can speak on newspapers of other African countries. But I believe they will all survive just like it will be for Nigerian newspapers. However, this will be determined basically by two factors. First, the extent the newspapers are able to adapt to the emerging technological changes and second, the extent they continue to give people what they don't get from the Internet – accurate and verified reports.

**4a.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Manir Dan Ali

**Designation:** Chief Executive Officer/Editor-in-Chief, *Daily Trust*

**Location:** CEO's office, Daily Trust Headquarters, Trust House, Abuja.

**Date:** January 14, 2019

**Time:** 1.15pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

Certainly no media house in the world can claim not to have been affected by the technological disruption that has come with the Internet and IT generally. We are not an exception. It has changed the way we do our work in many areas. However, while it has brought challenges, it also presents an opportunity. It all depends on how you might want to look at it. One can say that it has eased our work because there are softwares that have changed dramatically the way we do our work. Like as I speak to you software that has been developed which sort of integrate the entire work process from when a reporter sends a report to the editing process to taking it through the production process where the plates are produced and the paper printed. Of course you can also publish the same copy on the Internet or send it via email to subscribers of the paper. Certainly that is one clear way it has changed the way we do our work, I will say for the better.

Of course there are also some other ways in which it has disrupted us in almost a negative way because it means advertisers have a choice beyond the hardcopies of



the newspaper. Advertising is now being done online. You find that access to your online version is free, you don't earn any money and then the big tech companies like Google and others are collecting the whole advert money and giving you peanuts. Our business model is even being threatened from that perspective.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

What we are trying to do is to bring up ways in which at least we share in some of the money the Googles of this world are taking away from us because it is based on visits and the number of clicks on your site. So we try to maximise that, so that at the end of the day, we get money paid to us because of the traffic that comes to our website. But even much more than that, we also in some areas put some of our content behind pay walls as some other newspapers in more advanced parts of the world have done. But as you know, you could shoot yourself in the foot as you do that because some people may not really understand the difference in the quality of what is offered in terms of content by different media organisations and so they may go where it is all free, which means your traffic could go down. So you have to watch it and calibrate whatever measure you take so that at the end of the day it does not harm your interest.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

It could be far better because honestly we are not satisfied with where we are at the moment. It could be far better. But we are not alone because all over the world the media have generally taken a big hit. Many old newspapers have closed shop as far as the old model of the printed copy is concerned because they are not earning enough to keep their business afloat. Mercifully, we are able to earn enough to keep our businesses afloat, but we wonder for how long because the beating we are taking from the Internet means that our copy sales have reduced drastically and as you very well know, people access the Internet (version) free. We have just been experimenting with selecting some content and putting it behind pay walls so that people pay something before they can access it. But overall, we are praying that it doesn't have to get to the level it got with some media houses like *The Guardian* of the UK where at the end of the day you also literally begging for people to support you with money so as to support the good journalism you are doing. I have seen it even here in Nigeria. I think it is *Premium Times*, at the end of their stories, you see them asking for financial support from readers to help them continue doing what they are doing. We are hoping and working hard not to have to go through that route. But as I said earlier, a lot of this is work in progress because we are all everyday trying to figure out how best to address the challenges. So, we keep tweaking with some of the models we are trying to do so as to ensure that at the end of the day we still have a business.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

I think especially in earning more money in terms of bot advertising. Nigerian market is still slow in terms of digital or online-based adverts especially from the newspapers because up till now you still find that the significant part of our income is coming from adverts in the printed edition of the paper. We are beginning to make small money, but it is not enough, but we need to work harder so that we can earn more money through advertising and also through metered paid content, so that any content we reckon is valuable to our readers, we put it behind pay wall so that you don't access it for free and we get the kind of money that will support us to do our work.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

I think is to keep tweaking our model and thinking outside the box and then of course if you have a credible platform, you can leverage on other areas whether it is e-commerce and other events that could fetch you some more income because at the end of the day the bottom line is how to earn to be able to keep your business open. If you are not earning enough it means you cannot keep your business open. Also, we need to figure out a way so that the Googles of this world are not the main beneficiaries of our hard work. As it is, the whole thing is skewed in their favour because they are the ones who are in charge of the worldwide technology in a way. They are the ones who have the deep pocket to invest billions of dollars to keep bots and all the other artificial intelligence and other cutting edge technologies needed to be ahead of the game. I mean newspapers like ours are too miniscule, we

don't have the capacity to do that. But I think (we may succeed in correcting this) if there is more understanding amongst the media that they also need to put up a fight even though it is a David and Goliath fight: very weak organisations versus behemoth strong worldwide. We have to keep working to find a formula to make us to get out of the big pot that the Googles of this world have turned advertising to and are benefitting more than the originators of the content like us.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

I would say that our response generally on the whole has been poor. We have not been quick to respond and you find that up till now you see that some of the media houses seem not to understand which way is up regarding this problem. So I wish we have reacted far better than we have done because we run the risk of a number of us disappearing over some period of time. Sadly we are not learning from what has happened in Europe and America where so many have disappeared. We should have seen it coming much more than we have done.

**Do you foresee free distribution of hardcopies as a future response by Nigerian newspapers?**

You know it has been tried. Somehow it hasn't worked well. It has been tried for a long time, even Kola Abiola tried it 20 years ago. I don't think it went far. There are a number of others. Even as I speak, we are thinking of it. But we have to be sure, because you have to spend a lot of money, and unless advertisements come (you

will not recover it). The model looks good, the application in the UK has succeeded, but out of the numbers that came, few have succeeded and many have died as well. So you have to be mindful of that and make sure you have the deep pocket to do it long enough till the time adverts starts coming because adverts won't start coming from day one. So you have to establish the name, the credibility and all of that and to be available whenever. When the model is on its feet, that is when advertisements will start coming to you.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Saharan Africa?**

As I said earlier, we in this part of the world are yet to realise the full potentials of the Internet in terms of earning money for our newspaper organisations. The US and Europe have gone very far past us and we now have a lot of ground to cover. That is basically the difference and it is a fundamental one, we are yet to become fully digital in terms of actually being able to earn money.

Regarding the future of hardcopy newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa. I think there is still a future (for the hardcopy), maybe a limited future, because in our society we know that up till now Internet penetration is not up to 100%. There are areas where it is almost non-existent, and there is cost to bear and not many people have the capacity to bear that cost. You need the data, so it is not like access is there free or very accessible. So because of that there will still be people for whom it is cheaper to use the print medium and of course for some print is still king in a way. I still see that there is a limited future for print. It won't disappear as people have been

predicting that it will disappear totally just as it has not disappeared even in the first world where Internet penetration and affordability are much higher.

Even in Europe and America, the model they are developing is such that reckons that there will still be the printed editions of the paper especially at the weekends when people have more time to read because there is a limit to which you can be staring at your smartphone or some other (electronic) media. So there is still some future, but maybe a limited future, for the print because the print is much easier on the eyes. It doesn't have the interactivity of your screen but you find that research by the Pew Research Centre, for instance, shows that even young people who are technology-savvy still find reason to read print. You see in this a possibility which you can translate to Nigeria.

**4b.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Shuaib Nma Imam

**Designation:** Director, Corporate Affairs/ Rep. Editor, Daily, *Daily Trust*

**Location:** Director, Corporate Affairs' office, Daily Trust Headquarters, Trust House, Abuja.

**Date:** January 15, 2019

**Time:** 2.30pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

There is no doubt that the introduction of the Internet has affected the media particularly the print media. Newspaper is part of print media. In all facets of operation it (new media) has affected it, ranging from production to distribution and market penetration. In production, in the past, during what I may call the analogue age, you had to set your materials, organise your paper, put it in a flash or disk and then go to the press house. But with the Internet, you can produce newspaper with the same content from different locations. For example, in *Daily Trust*, we have four presses in Abuja, Lagos, Maiduguri and Kano. We can publish the same stories simultaneously. So it has made things easier. It has helped in the distribution of copies – Lagos covers the south, Maiduguri covers the northeast, Kano covers the northwest and Abuja covers the north central.

In the area of newsgathering, you don't need to have the journalist in the office before they can submit their report. With the introduction of the Internet, they are able to file in their reports from wherever they are. Sometimes, they do give us updates from the field. They do not need to come to office to do that. Without the Internet, this wouldn't have been possible.

From the business perspective also, the introduction of the Internet is a very big challenge for newspapers these days and if you are not up to the task, before your newspaper hits the newsstands in the morning, the day's news is already everywhere. One way we try to confront this is the depth of our news, the credibility of our news and the trust we have built in our readers. All these have helped us to stay afloat in the market. As you are aware, our motto is "Trust is a

burden". Each time we consider news gathering and dissemination as a burden. So we don't report if it is not factual, if we are not too sure of the facts, we carry out our investigation to be sure before reporting. Because we have done this over a long period of time, it has built confidence in the minds of our readers.

With the Internet we also try to share our breaking news. This is also a strategy to keep our brand afloat. Also, we don't publish some important information such as certain adverts online so that people will be encouraged to buy the hardcopy.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

Just like we say, *Daily Trust* is a newspaper that is built on trust. There are a number of things we put in place to retain our public trust. For instance, we have what is called whistle-blower programme. We also have "policy of no-thank-you" which prohibits our reporters from receiving gratifications from news sources. This is to ensure objectivity and credibility. This has helped us in publishing quality news that people can trust. We also have the policy of rewarding those staff members who have distinguished themselves in professionalism and character during our annual Chairman's Merit Award. These are journalists who have rejected bribes, usually represented as "appreciation". We give them certificate of recognition and sometimes cash award and sometimes promotions. All these have helped us to retain a high quality. Secondly, we do a balanced reporting, we try to hear from all



relevant sources before publishing. This has also built trust in the minds of our readers. We also ensure that the quality of our news production.

We also insist on our personnel having the necessary digital skills. Media managers should be technologically savvy. They should update their technological skills. We have *Trust TV* and of course we have an online editor who is a journalist but is also skilled in the area of digital content and digital production. Here we have an online section. This section is also in charge of online content. We have the webmaster and the online editor who are all in charge of the online content of our newspaper.

Also, with respect to the hardcopy, we are trying to update our knowledge of the market. We have people who are expert in strategies of market penetration. For instance, some years back, our presence was not very visible in Lagos, but with some aggressive marketing strategy by managers that are well grounded, we were able to penetrate the Lagos market and all the south-east and south-west states. We train and retrain our managers to be conversant with how to handle the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Sometimes we take our managers to US, UK and Europe to train them so that they can be conversant with the global best practices in newspaper industry. Just last year, we invited Press Association to train our journalists in the area of digital content. They spent a week training them.

Another area we are trying to improve is infographic which is the representation of communication in graphic form. How many people can afford to read 1000 pages of a budget or report? So what we try to do is to reduce these materials to one or two

pages using charts and figures to make them easily readable. *Daily Trust* is one of the leading newspapers in the area of infographic because we have an infographic desk. All the people there are experts in the area. We are reading and researching. We have a research and development unit that also conducts market research and observing trends in the industry and giving us feedback so that we can make necessary adjustments in our activities.

So far so good we have been utilising the Internet in the various areas of operations. These include the human resources management where we use it to keep data of workers. We even do our recruitment aptitude tests online. You don't have to be in Abuja (the headquarters) or any of our offices, you can be in your room and do the test. You can apply online, do your first aptitude test, second aptitude test online. It is only at the (oral) interview stage that you are required to appear physically at the office. It saves time, saves cost and risks of transportation.

May be I can say that the editorial aspect has benefitted more from the Internet. Here we have two major sections: editorial and operations.

Even advertisement bookings are done online, payments are made online. Adverts are sent online and we publish them. We apply the Internet in all aspects but I would say conclusively that the editorial has benefitted most. Operations is trying to come up gradually.

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges that are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

There is always room for improvement. All I can say is that we are applying the Internet to improve our services, to become one of the leading newspapers in the world, packaging and disseminating credible information to all stakeholders.

But there is evidence that we are coping well. From our statistics, the *Daily Trust* market share is increasing. Our market penetration is growing. For instance, by the end of 2015, Media Fact rated *Daily Trust* as the number one newspaper in Nigeria. At the end of 2016, the Nigerian National Media Merit Award also rated *Daily Trust* as the number one newspaper in Nigeria and there are key indicators for this rating. One of them is area of coverage, how accessible your paper is and the quality of content.

But then, even as you are trying to cope, you cannot escape the challenges. The Internet is not an isolated system, there are other factors that affect it. You have to think about electricity, connectivity, and the quality of network given by service providers. All these affect how much we are able to harness the Internet in our operation. For instance, at times, we may have our website down and we have to call the Internet providers. As you know, in developing countries, electricity and all the other infrastructure related to the Internet have their shortcomings and instability. So, they one way or the other affect our quality of service as well.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Improvement is a routine thing in running any organisation. I don't really think there is any specific area of our operations where we will not require improvement in one form or the other, if not now then definitely in the future. As I said, we keep working to be better and this naturally entails improving our performance from time to time as may be necessary.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

One of the key things you need to do to remain afloat in the market is to ensure that you do not compromise on the principles of journalism. You need to ensure that the quality of news you publish is high and that the news is credible so that you can build the confidence of your reader. Despite the penetration of the Internet, you still need to work hard to make your hardcopy attractive because you still need hardcopy revenue, circulation and advertisements to stay afloat.

You also need to make your news investigative. The world is moving towards investigative journalism. You need to dig for facts and cross-check them. All these help you stay afloat.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

Essentially, Nigeria is a country with a very harsh economic situation. In 2016 and some part of 2017, Nigeria went into recession, and it has impacted on the life of people and businesses. So it is very difficult for newspapers to survive because of harsh economic environment. Also the ownership factor and political factors are affecting the industry. But this does not mean that because some newspapers have collapsed, all other will collapse. There are a lot of newspapers coming up and there are others doing well. The newspapers are trying to blend the hardcopy and the Internet to keep afloat amidst this harsh economic situation. You can hardly find a newspaper without an online presence today.

**Do you see a future where Nigerian newspapers will start distributing free hardcopies as a response strategy?**

We may not rule out the fact that it is a possibility in Nigeria. But as it stands now, it is difficult for one to assert that it is something that will happen in the near future.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Saharan Africa?**

I may not have sufficient knowledge of what is happening with newspaper industries in other sub-Saharan African countries. But Nigeria is the giant of Africa, the biggest country in Africa, so whatever that is happening in Nigeria is more or less a reflection of what is happening in other parts of Africa. The newspaper industry in Nigeria will have to work in line with the realities of the time. The managers have to be imaginative and visionary because the disruption (as brought about by the Internet) is massive and may be unpredictable in its metamorphosis.

The same thing applies to industries in other African countries. For countries in other parts of the world, it is still basically the same response. The issue of whether the hardcopy will survive is continuously debated. However, the most important thing is that you work ahead of time, proactively, to respond to whatever the future holds. For instance, we are trying to diversify, going into radio production, TV production. As you are aware, there is Trust TV which is online where we try to share short video clips and Trust Radio where we share audio clips. Of course we also have our Twitter handle, Facebook page, Instagram account, we share YouTube video. We are trying to move with the trend. *Daily Trust* is still publishing hardcopies, but we are trying to diversify. So at any time we consider the hardcopy as no more sustainable, we can continue with all these other aspects.

#### **4c.**

**Name of Interviewee:** Yusuf Juda

**Designation:** Marketing Manager, *Daily Trust*

**Location:** Marketing Manager's office, Daily Trust Headquarters, Trust House, Abuja.

**Date:** January 14, 2019

**Time:** 2.30pm

**In what ways have the penetration of the Internet affected the operations of your organisation?**

The advent of the Internet has quickened the rate of workflow. In the past, before the advent of the Internet, there was a lot of problems in terms of reporting the

revenue. But with the Internet, you know on daily basis what your sales figures are virtually in all your outstations. That is on the positive side. On the other hand, it has negatively impacted sales because you find out that the younger generation today prefer to read news on Internet platforms which are close to being free. It is mostly the older generation (may be people in their 40s upwards) that still read the hardcopy, but teenagers, those in university, prefer the Internet version.

**What measures has your organisation put in place to address the challenges which the Internet poses to your operation with particular emphasis on your own department and duties?**

Well, in that regard, we have devised a way to charge for the e-copy. But the problem is that the value of e-copy is only a fraction of that of the hardcopy, but it is more easily distributed to readers.

Two, on our Internet platform, we make sure that we have just summaries of write-ups, and if you want the full details of the write-ups, you have to make reference to the hardcopy or you buy the e-copy. When you log on to the website, you will see the snippets of all available news but you cannot see the entire paper. If you want the whole paper, you have to subscribe to the e-copy or you make reference to the hardcopy.

The economic realities affecting the average household in the country has forced us to start paying attention to subscription. We are massively investing in subscription and I can tell you that we have over 35, 000 hardcopy subscriptions as at today and

we give the subscription at between 35 percent and 50 percent discount depending on the season and the area. For instance, in far remote areas where income level is typically low, we do it at 50 percent, but in urban areas it usually doesn't get as low. This tends to reduce the cost on readers.

We are also diversifying our revenue base. For instance, our initial intention when we ventured into procurement of printing facilities was to meet up with our readers very early in the morning. Initially when we started, we were printing only in Abuja and from there distributing to the whole country. You can imagine going from here to Maiduguri which is about a 1000 kilometres from Abuja. So, as Abuja people are reading the paper at 6 in the morning, it would not get to Maiduguri till around 6 in the evening. So because of that we decided to massively invest in procuring printing facilities so that we can cover everywhere. That is why we had to establish a press in Maiduguri, another one in Kano, another one in Lagos, and now we are looking at Port Harcourt (Rivers) or Enugu. Now when this crunch came, we thought of diversification. And one area where we thought of diversifying into is commercialising our press. So we opened our press even to our co-competitors. We print for our co-competitors that do not have printing facilities. And from this commercial printing, last year alone, we made over 600 million naira (\$1.55M). That is one area.

Currently this year, I am working in conjunction with Wema Bank for a partnership where Wema Bank will come to train our vendors to engage in agent banking. You know how people queue up at ATM for money. The CBN has introduced a system



whereby if you have a business that gives you cash, you don't have to go to bank to deposit your cash, and you can be giving cash to people while they pay you back through POS. We are trying to work in partnership. We give the vendors access to the database while they give us commission per transaction. These are all in connection with the business. We are not thinking outside the box, but beside the box. By this we are empowering the vendor, giving him more streams of income and by this encouraging him to stay in the business and continue working with us and selling the paper.

Thirdly, we have just devised a means where we have a piece of public furniture where the front has the inscription *Daily Trust*, the sides are blank. We are thinking of giving out these sides for adverts. That is another stream of income. But all are intertwined within the business (of newspaper).

**Generally, do you think your organisation is coping well with whatever challenges that are posed to your operations by the Internet?**

Are we successful in coping with the challenges? Well, I couldn't call it "successful" in that regard. But it (our strategy) has been fairly effective in dealing with the challenges. If at all the e-platform is giving us money close to what we generate from the hardcopy printed, I will call it successful. But till today, it is still lagging far far far below the hardcopy, but at least we are there and we are moving.

However, we are no doubt still a successful newspaper. No newspaper covers the (amount of) areas we cover. There is no local government area you go in the entire

northern Nigeria that you will not find our paper. In Lagos, we have a dedicated press serving the whole southwest. The only place we still have a challenge is in the east, and we are working towards establishing a press may be somewhere in Port Harcourt or Enugu. Our ability to hit the market as early as 6 in the morning has given us an edge in terms of covering the market. We command the market. I agree there has been decline in the last five years in terms of sales. But this decline was precipitated by the economic changes in the country and we know how these economic developments have affected the income of an average household in the country. Two, the exchange rate has also affected us. In 2014, the dollar was N160 per dollar. All of a sudden in 2015 we began to buy it at 500 naira. This made almost all newspapers in the country to increase their cover price. Now with the cover price up, the income of an average household – due to the economic difficulties in the country – has either stagnated or even gone down. And that affected the size of readership for all newspapers in the country. So if this has affected *Daily Trust*, you can imagine what has happened to others. But that notwithstanding, if you look at the size, the hardcopy is still dominant. In fact, the news is only accurate if it is printed on paper. Whatever is on the Internet may not be believed by people.

**In what areas do you think your organisation may require to do more in dealing with the challenges posed to your operations by the Internet?**

We need to explore ways of making enough money from our online platforms. We have invested much in them in terms of equipment, funding and human resources, so it will be only fair to say that we deserve some returns on investment. But as it is today, we are yet to have such returns satisfactorily, at least. That shows that we

really have to continue working to devise strategies that will take us beyond where we are today in terms of online revenue.

**What do you think is the way forward generally for your organisation in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and increasing challenges this potentially entails?**

I believe we are doing the right thing now by trying to key into the new media possibilities and adjusting our operations to suit the necessities of the time. Once we keep doing this, we are inevitably heading in the right direction. There is no other way to be assured of the future than to remain consistent on the right path. This is what we should focus on towards realising our full potentials.

**Could you assess the response of the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a whole and its future prospects in the face of the growing penetration of the Internet and the attendant challenges?**

We have done quite well, I must say. But one needs to be cautious in making such sweeping judgment because individual newspapers have performed differently in terms of level of success. So, it may not be accurate to pass a collective judgment. Be that as it may, the industry in Nigeria is still vibrant enough to offer some good hope of a happy future. For us in *Daily Trust*, we are fortunate to stand among the best in this regard. Ultimately, the future will not be for everybody, some will survive some will not, some will be more successful than others.

**Compared to the operations of newspaper organizations in other parts of the world, what is the future of hardcopy newspapers in Sub-Saharan Africa?**

While I may not be able to make this comparison, I can only affirm that the hardcopy still has a long future ahead of it everywhere – whether in Africa or elsewhere. But for us in Sub-Saharan Africa, the main problem is that the major materials involved in the production of hardcopy are still being imported. For instance, the newsprint which is the most important material for newspaper printing (art paper is for magazine), you need to import it. It is bought at the dollar rate and you know what dollar is to naira right now. So that is a troubling challenge. But aside that, I see a very bright future. If the hardcopy couldn't go in the west, it will not go here.

Sometimes back in 2010, 2009 and 2008, there was this euphoria about Internet news, Internet information. Everybody thought that print, not just newspaper, will die away. That was the initial thinking. But five years later, when a lot of newspapers and magazines abroad were giving up the hardcopy and going to digital publishing, they realised they were not making any impact in terms of revenue, and they began to come back to hardcopy. An example is *The Economist* of London. These newspapers and magazines realised that they could not survive without the hardcopy. I tell you, like I said earlier, the printed newspaper, the printed magazine and all other printed materials still have a very long future before them because the world is realising that the two are equally important. In spite of the fact that there are good developments in the Internet technology and there is Internet explosion, you still can't do without the good old hardcopy. So virtually all the magazines

abroad that went digital are now slowly creeping back to hardcopy, and those of us that remained with the hardcopy are still thriving in our businesses. It is just that the business is no longer as it used to be prior to 2010.

But one thing I think that will be very critical to our survival is our ability to start earning enough money from our online platforms, both by way of adverts and selling of content. I think it is a collective thing with the media industry as a whole because if you as an individual media house try to hoard your own news or place a premium relative to effort you put in producing the news, you find out that your co-competitors are out there giving it out free. So the challenge is an industry challenge but it affects each individual player. For instance, in regard to advertisements, if Newspaper Proprietors' Association of Nigeria (NPAN) sit down together and decide on a minimum advert rate which no newspaper must go below and a maximum rate which no one must exceed, it will help. We need something like that to help the industry generally and introduce a level playing ground. Newspaper A cannot be charging say 50 naira (13 cents) for content and Newspaper B is giving it free of charge because in such a situation you cannot expect Newspaper A's e-copy to be making any impact. I am saying this basically in reference to the five major newspapers in the country – *Daily Trust* is number one, *The Punch* is two, maybe you look at *Vanguard*, *The Guardian* and *ThisDay*. When I describe them as the biggest newspapers, I am talking about readership basically. Only *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* print in excess of 40, 000 copies a day; all the others print from 10, 000 copies down.

## Appendix IV: Newspaper Audiences' Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Transcripts

### 1.

**Group Designation:** Group 1

**Location:** Abuja (Wuse - Federal Capital Territory), Northern Nigeria

**Date:** January 14, 2019

**Time:** 11.15am

**Moderator:** Can we describe your? **our** newspaper reading habit?

**Discussant 1:** I buy newspaper every day, one or two copies – hardcopy.

**Discussant 2:** Basically, almost every day – from Monday to Friday – these are working hours that I come out to read newspapers. I don't buy every day, most times, if I see a headline that catches my attention, I buy. Basically, I just read the headline everyday but I buy twice or thrice a week.

**Discussant 3:** I do buy newspaper, at least every weekend. There is no Friday I do not buy newspaper. Because what I read in the newspaper does not make sense, I choose not to buy most times, I just come to newsstand to read.

**Discussant 4:** I read newspaper every day. I don't buy everyday; we are in the jet age, I just go online and read. I get all the information I need online.

**Discussant 5:** Well, as a citizen of the country who believes in knowing what is trending politically and otherwise, I read newspaper often. I buy newspapers more

or less on daily basis. Sometimes I buy one copy, sometimes I buy two depending on the stories they have and the amount of money I have.

**Discussant 6:** Yes, I buy and read newspaper. I buy every day, I read every day. I read online on my phone. I also read the hardcopies that I buy. In a week I buy seven copies – one each day.

**Moderator:** Can we share your? **our** attitude to online newspapers, are we inclined to reading them?

**Discussant 2:** I read online basically when I am with my phone. I do have news flash when it comes then I read from them. Sometimes (I read) through my laptop. I read randomly on my Android phone. Sometimes I log on to websites.

**Discussant 3:** I read it and absorb it just for me to be enlightened. I like being informed.

**Discussant 4:** I read with my phone in order to know what is happening in the country. I read with my phone.

**Discussant 5:** I do read online newspaper. If there is breaking news, if (hardcopy) newspaper is not within my reach that time, I can open my telephone and have a glance at that particular news.

**Moderator:** What do you like about online newspapers vis-à-vis the hardcopy?  
What do you find attractive about them?

**Discussant 1:** There are contents you cannot find online. They select the contents they put online. I follow newspapers online but I also buy one or two daily. There are some interviews you may not find online. There is some business news that I follow almost on daily basis that may not be in the online version of the newspaper.

**Discussant 2:** From online (newspapers), you get the major headlines that are short and precise, you get the major news of the day. The physical newspaper is bulkier.

**Discussant 3:** When I read it online it helps me to understand it (news) better. I read with concentration as against when I read at restaurants.

**Discussant 4:** I like accessing the newspaper online. I appreciate online newspaper more because it is more convenient. All we need is to avoid spreading fake news.

**Discussant 5:** Online (newspapers) sometimes don't give full details. I always like going online when there is any breaking news. When I listen to radio and hear breaking news, I can now go online to read. This also depends on whether you have data at that point in time.

**Discussant 6:** The hardcopy newspapers, sometimes, they are telling lies. But in online newspapers, there are facts.



**Moderator:** As readers, how do we assess the Nigerian newspapers in terms of satisfactorily adopting the trend of online newspapering?

**Discussant 1:** The hardcopies and online papers are two different worlds. While there are conventional newspapers (some of them have gone online) there are exclusively online newspapers. But both of them have their areas of strength in the sense that some may be strong in the areas of politics and investigative reporting, others may be strong in other areas. Both of them may be considered satisfactory depending on what someone wants.

**Discussant 2:** When it comes to breaking news, I give it to Nigerian online media. As the news breaks, they always give it to the public. There are also instances where a news event is still ongoing and online newspapers have already published them. So I really give it to Nigerian newspapers, they have really improved.

**Discussant 3:** Yes the Nigerian newspapers are trying by publishing online because there are people that do not have the privilege of coming out to read on the stands.

**Discussant 4:** I can't really say much. The only thing I can say is that we get the information we need from the papers.

**Discussant 5:** Just like I said, Nigerian newspapers cover very well. But with the online version, they cover faster. For instance, there is an outbreak of fire

somewhere in Kaduna (a popular city in Northern Nigeria) you can see it there. But that of (physical) newspaper will be tomorrow. (By then) you would have acquired the knowledge of what happened. However, with (physical newspapers) you can get the whole information on what happened; the cause of it, what happened before and after the incident. You learn of the casualties and also hear other people's opinion (on the happening).

**Discussant 6:** Yes their reporting is good. I like their reporting and how they are catching up with the online trend.

**Moderator:** Can we now say generally that the Internet technology has helped Nigerian newspapers to improve on their delivery to the audience?

**Discussant 1:** Yes, the internet has done a lot because of the online boos usually define the content people like, so it one way or the other affects the hardcopy newspaper. So the newspapers have to take care of the readers that may read online and those that may read off-line.

**Discussant 2:** Very well; the increased Internet access has really helped online news to sell faster.

**Discussant 3:** Very very well, I would say 100 percent. To me, I get every information I require online... their services are okay for me. I don't know for other people.

**Discussant 1:** The newspapers online tries to break the news as it emerges while hardcopies try to give you an extended version (of the reports) trying to balance all angles of the report. While the online newspapers are trying to break the news (as quickly as possible), it has affected the sale of hardcopies as not many people go to buy newspapers as they can access them online.

**Discussant 4:** Yes the Internet has been very helpful because I get a lot of messages from the Internet. They (the newspapers) are really really trying their best. They are doing perfectly.

**Discussant 5:** Well, Internet (newspapers) are on their own while hardcopies are on their own. They work hand in hand. Internet might be helping hardcopy newspapers because the editors can through them can get information from all over the world.

**Discussant 6:** Yes it is helping them.

**Moderator:** But do you think that there are areas requiring improvement, where they can do more to provide better reading experience?

**Discussant 1:** There are a lot of fake news these days. So, you see a situation where something is said to have happened in another country, without verification, without speaking to people on ground – just because you want traffic, you just go and break it. Also, there is the problem of balance – trying to hear the both sides of

the story before you break the story. These are the two areas I think there is need for improvement.

**Discussant 2:** The channel of distribution of hardcopies should improve. There are areas that if you don't go to, you cannot read newspaper.

**Discussant 4:** Personally, I rarely see the need to post comment whenever I read reports from newspapers. Perhaps, it could be because the newspapers rarely provide such forum. I believe it is good that the newspapers keep giving us the opportunity to express ourselves.

**Moderator:** Do you think physical newspapers are still relevant?

**Discussant 2:** Yes, because of the older generation. The older generation is not computer-literate and does not have flair for Android phones. They still believe in the hardcopy. That is where they get their news. Like my father, I can't imagine him getting news from an Android phone or the Internet. He still prefers the hardcopy. For the youth, I know that Internet newspaper reading is preferred.

**Discussant 1:** They should be producing physical newspapers because some people cannot access online newspapers for one reason or the other. And since it is not all the newspaper content is online, the physical newspaper is still relevant. Even for reference purposes, the (physical) newspaper should still be produced.

**Discussant 3:** Not everybody has the privilege of being online. Let the papers still be publishing (hardcopies).

**Discussant 4:** Yes it should still be published like my brother here said, not everyone has the privilege of being online or can purchase an Android phone.

**Discussant 5:** Well, it is very important that they keep on publishing. They shouldn't stop. How many Nigerians have access to the Internet? Even if they have, do they have data? Like me, I don't have data now that is why you see me here reading the hardcopy newspaper. So I encourage Nigerian newspapers to move on (with hardcopy) publishing). They shouldn't stop.

**Discussant 6:** I don't advise them to stop (publishing hardcopies) because as it is now, it (hardcopies) help a lot of people. If they stop it, it will be a problem. It is not everybody that has phone that can browse.

**Moderator:** Has the online experience affected the extent you might want to read physical newspapers?

**Discussant 1:** Yes most of the news I read in the hardcopy I have already read it online. But there are some features, there are some columns, there is some business news, there are some interviews that may not be there online. So, (for) those ones, I may still like to buy the newspaper in order to go through them. So the

online experience has affected the number of newspapers I buy. Normally, I buy two newspapers daily, but now I usually buy one.

**Discussant 2:** Sure. Sometimes, what makes me to buy newspapers is if there is news I want to read that is not online. If not, most times I read online and I am okay. So online readership of newspapers has really helped in slowing down the sale of hardcopy newspapers.

**Discussant 3:** Somebody like me, every weekend, I buy a newspaper. I am a security personnel and I get some hint from it. So, I feel happy anytime I buy a newspaper. It costs me some money. However, not everyone can buy newspapers because of the economic problem in the country.

**Discussant 4:** Yes because online reading is cheaper. If I buy data, I use it to read newspapers and also do other things such as visiting Facebook, Instagram and checking mail.

**Discussant 5:** Yes. Anytime, I feel like going online to read newspapers, it might limit my going out to buy newspapers on that particular day. If I check online and read some pieces of news, when I see them in (physical) newspapers, I don't need to read them because I have already gone through them, unless there is any need for reference purposes tomorrow, then I can buy and keep.

**Discussant 6:** No it has not because I can always decide to read either online or off-line. If I read online I don't read off-line. I get all the content online.

**Moderator:** Thanks friends for participating in this session.

## 2.

**Group Designation:** Group 2

**Location:** Anambra State (Awka), South-East Nigeria

**Date:** December 22, 2018

**Time:** 10.05am

**Moderator:** Can we describe our newspaper reading habit?

**Discussant 7:** I read newspapers every day. Incidentally, the newspaper happens to be a usual means of accessing news. So, I formed it as a habit that any time I am on the road, I look out for newspaper stands. The least I could do is to flip through the headlines. Sometimes, if I have time, I look at the pages.

**Discussant 10:** Given the fact that newspapers are aimed at informing the people, I read newspapers to get informed. Most times, I don't read details, I look at the headlines. But sometimes, political stories, I like to read the details. I do that on daily basis. Sometimes I read hardcopies, sometimes I read the online version.

**Discussant 8:** I grew up knowing my father as a regular newspaper reader. You don't just read newspapers only to get information. It is also a way of keeping records of past events which tomorrow you can go back and make out things from what you have already stored.



**Discussant 11:** I know I didn't take my education to higher institution, I stopped at secondary school, but that does not prevent me from reading newspapers because I want to get information. I want to know what every other person knows. When I go to the newspaper stand, apart from flipping through the pages, sometimes if I have money, I buy. Sometimes, I stay there, I listen to arguments, what people are saying and also form my own opinion. I also get involved in the arguments. Sometimes, I read through my mobile phones.

**Moderator:** It appears all of us are daily readers... In terms of hardcopy newspapers, how regularly do we buy?

**Discussant 7:** Sincerely, with the revolution started off by the online version of the newspaper, it makes it hard for me to find it worthwhile buying a copy of the newspaper unless I have particular interest in a particular news story coming out in print – that is when I can purchase a hardcopy. So, incidentally, I don't buy newspaper everyday; I buy once in a while.

**Discussant 10:** Somebody like me, I don't buy newspapers regularly. I buy once in a while particularly when I have something to do with that very newspaper edition. Usually, I just go to newsstands, read and go way. There was a time in the past we formed something that is known as Free Readers Association whereby we go to a newsstand, register with a certain amount of money, and each time you come to that particular stand, you pick a newspaper copy, read as much as you can, drop it and go. That's what you do.

**Discussant 8:** For the fact that I like keeping records (information is vital to me), I buy newspapers. I know I buy newspapers on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and maybe sometimes on weekends. I buy the papers just to make sure I don't miss out on any important story.

**Discussant 9:** Like I said earlier, I love knowledge. So sometimes, if I go to newspaper stands, that is, if I have the money (I buy). I also buy when there is a trending human angle story; a story on human experience. Such stories make me to buy newspapers. I also think that if such stories are coming out regularly, I would like to be buying newspapers regularly.

**Moderator:** Can we describe our attitude to online newspapers; are we inclined to reading them?

**Discussant 10:** I read online newspapers sometimes. If I wake up in the morning, I switch on my data and read some of the newspapers. I subscribe to some of the national newspapers. I read whatever is on their website. But sometimes, I don't read. I might have problem with my battery due to power failure. If I don't have enough data, I might not be able to read. These are some of the challenges that prevent me from reading the online versions. And if I have such challenges, I am compelled to go to a newspaper stand close to me to read hardcopies free.

**Moderator:** Compare these problems of electricity and data with the problems you have reading hardcopy newspapers – which are more difficult?

**Discussant 10:** If you ask me, I would say that buying the hardcopy may be cheaper. For instance, if there is no power in your area, you may need to buy fuel to power your generator and you know what that costs.

**Moderator:** But with your small data you can read up to 10 different newspapers?

**Discussant 10:** Yes I agree. But if you ask me, I would say that buying one newspaper copy of 200 naira is still cheaper. Reading that copy alone gives you enough information and knowledge. I don't need to read all the newspapers to know what I need to know.

**Discussant 8:** Online newspaper is a welcome development. But I go to online newspaper just to get a particular piece of vital information I might need. As for reading, I don't like reading online. I prefer reading the print because I believe that there is lot of fake news, lies and propaganda online. People can just come up to cook stories and post. When I go online and check for trending stories, I will now go to the print version to read it.

**Discussant 9:** I like online newspapers. Sometimes, when I switch on my data, I see some of the headlines. But I like going to newsstands to read print versions every

day. Part of the reason is that I like being with people who make analysis on the issues. For me, I think both hardcopies and softcopies are good and useful.

**Moderator:** Can we be specific and compare our preference?

**Discussant 10:** Yes I have preference. I prefer reading online. It saves me the time of going to newspaper stands. It also saves one the embarrassment that sometimes comes from vendors who insist that before you read their copies you must drop some money. But if you read online, once you have the time, battery power and data, you can read as many newspapers as you like including foreign newspapers. So, I prefer online version of newspapers.

**Discussant 12:** I see the hardcopy and softcopy as complementary. It depends on the person reading. But for me, I prefer the hardcopy.

**Discussant 8:** I have said it already that I grew up in a family where the newspaper is taken as a very vital source of information and record keeping. For that reason, I grew up learning to keep newspapers especially those ones I feel will give me the information I like. The disadvantage with online newspapers which I don't like is the complexity of writing and the fake news aspect. But when I get a hardcopy, I feel confident that what I have is authentic.

**Moderator:** Does this credibility issues also affect traditional newspapers like *The Sun*, *Vanguard* and others that started as hardcopy-only papers before having online versions?

**Discussant 8:** Well, I could put my trust on them when I go to their websites. But you know, opening their websites is data-consuming. Also, information you get strictly on WhatsApp and Facebook is porous and vulnerable to fake news. If I am to visit the online version of *The Punch* and *Vanguard* (for instance), I would be confident that what I have is original.

**Discussant 10:** My fear personally most times is fake news; there are some fake newspaper websites. For instance, you could have two *Vanguard* websites; one authentic and one fake, so you wouldn't know which one is which. Sometimes they may post fake news on one. So, it may be risky.

**Discussant 8:** I agree.

**Discussant 9:** I don't agree because there is what you call domain name and you cannot have two domain names. Once you are sure of the domain name of the particular newspaper you want to read, you wouldn't run the risk of reading fake news.

**Moderator:** Does everyone know of this? Sometimes you merely see a link which you may click without even reading the address.

**Discussant 9:** But you have the choice of opening the link or not. What newspaper websites give you are links to their own stories. They hardly give you external links.

**Moderator:** What of when you are on other sites and you see a link purportedly taking you to a newspaper site.

**Discussant 9:** That is why we talk of self-censorship.

**Moderator:** Are you talking about yourself as being particularly cautious?

**Discussant 9:** Yes. But everybody may not know this.

**Moderator:** As readers, how do we assess Nigerian newspapers in terms of satisfactorily adopting the trend of online newspapering?

**Discussant 10:** Some not all of them are doing well. In Nigeria today, you will see that there are some newspapers that have strong online presence. You talk about *Daily Trust*, *The Sun*, *Vanguard* and all that. The problem sometimes is that you may see an interesting story, they will give just one or two paragraphs and write “details later”. The details will be in their hardcopy the next morning. But normally, they ought to give the full details online so that readers who may not have the privilege of accessing the hardcopies can read and get details of the news. So, I think some newspapers are very efficient online while some are still trailing behind.

**Moderator:** Personally does it make you to go for the hardcopy when you see “details later”?

**Discussant 10:** Sometimes due to the economic implications I don’t. I just make do with what I see online.

**Discussant 9:** Just to add to what he just said, I think the incident of “details later” occurs in cases of news break. You know that with the online culture, every newspaper wants to break the news first. Whenever their reporter breaks the news, they post whatever information that is available at the time, no matter how scanty, then directing the reader to wait for details later. I know I have once gone back online and saw the details of a report earlier broken. That is when they have gathered all the information.

**Moderator:** Okay Gab, could you react to the issue under consideration? How do you assess the newspapers in terms of catching up with the new trend?

**Discussant 10:** Well, I will give them above 50 percent. We are not yet there. It is not all about newspapering alone; everything in Nigeria is suffering. Some other challenges include electricity; if you don’t have access to power, you can’t have access (to online content). I have a friend who works in a newspaper house. He complains of how electricity impedes their operation, they buy diesel a lot. Of course, some of the newspapers are doing very well. Their online versions are

always up to date. They can compete globally. Whenever anything happens nationally, you will see it on their website.

**Discussant 8:** Well, I must say that I am impressed with the current trend of online newspapering in Nigeria because Nigeria is a developing country and today virtually over 65% of youths have mobile phones and data on their hand. So, you see people write short stories about breaking news wherever they are and you see “details later”. Yes, details might not come later, but you have at least got the information, and it makes you aware of such news, as such, you can wait for the hardcopy the following day to read the full details of the news at newspaper stands. There are still gaps, though.

**Moderator:** When you talk of the general inefficiencies are you sure this is the best that we can have?

**Discussant 8:** There is problem of bias associated with online journalism but it doesn’t so much apply to traditional newspapers.

**Discussant 7:** I am not satisfied considering that newspapers in other parts of the world have gone on to better adopt the trend. Right now, their online presence is lot more user-friendly and it appeals to all your senses. You see *The Guardian* (of UK) having videos on their site. There are some features in online newspapers you find in developing countries that you don’t find in Nigeria. These are some of the shortcomings. Then, you find some newspapers whose online presence is nothing to



write home about. So, we have a good number of time. Also, there are a lot of things that happen in society that are not reported; a lot of stories in society not being told because most of the newspaper outfits we have do not have the capacity to hold their own; so it tends to limit the number of stories they give out to the public. So they have not capitalised on online technology to increase their capacity in this regard. There is a lot of catching-up they need to do. For the ones they report, I don't think the quality is exactly what it should be. For someone like me that pays attention to grammar, there are contents you find online with a lot of grammatical errors due to poor editing. Also you may find it difficult locating stories on their websites. You might be looking for an item and you type in their search engines and yet you find it difficult to locate the content. It happens in some sites not all. So there are technical lapses. When it comes to content, they are doing alright, but the speed is not yet there. But incidentally you find out that there are some rebellious online outfits that are beginning to rear their heads up and challenging the ones that have been there since – the conventional newspapers. These rebellious online newspapers are actually making the conventional ones sit up. The competition is there right now and the conventional newspaper houses are beginning to buckle up.

**Moderator:** What of the platforms – apps, social media handles etc – how have the newspapers leveraged these?

**Discussant 11:** I think some newspapers are leveraging these platforms. For instance, I know of *Orient Daily* – they have their Facebook page, they have their

Twitter Handle. Through these platforms, their online presence is felt. What I feel is that some of the readers are not disposed to using these platforms. For instance, not too many people access the Twitter handle, they rely more on websites and hardcopies. Myself, I am on these social media platforms and I access newspapers through them. They may not have the details of the reports but they have the links to the details.

**Discussant 8:** Actually I will tell you that some – not all – newspapers in Nigeria leverage these (social media) platforms. But the thing is that most readers are not active enough to access some of these platforms. For me, once I read the online version of a newspaper, I don't have time to go to their Facebook, Twitter and all that.

**Discussant 8:** For me I don't believe in social media platforms because as I said earlier they are the storehouse for fake news and hate speech. So I don't put my trust on these platforms. But once I read any news that comes up on websites or hardcopy, I am okay.

**Discussant 7:** Everything boils down to how smart the device you are using is. But as to whether the newspapers are leveraging the social media platforms, I would say yes to an extent some of them are. Know that if you as an individual have a smartphone like an iPhone that helps you to have some of these software, you will be getting popups from these newspapers. If you rely only on the websites, you wouldn't know when news story comes up if you are not on these platforms. For

instance, if you are on Twitter, and a story is posted on website, the newspaper also tweets the report and you can follow the link to read the details. I know there is a way it happens that if a story is posted on the website, it automatically Tweets on the Twitter handle, is shared on Facebook etc.

**Moderator:** As a reader, do you leverage these platforms?

**Discussant 7:** Sure I leverage these social media platforms. I subscribe to them. I subscribe to both national and international newspapers. I still maintain that we in this part of the world have not fully harnessed the power of the new media.

**Moderator:** Can we now say generally that the Internet technology has helped Nigerian newspapers to improve on their delivery to the audience?

**Discussant 7:** Yes, it is true.

**Discussant 10:** Yes, of course.

**Discussant 8:** Yes.

**Discussant 9:** Most definitely, they have satisfied the audience more.

**Moderator:** But do you think that there are areas requiring improvement; where they can do more to provide better reading experience?

**Discussant 8:** The area I can say is the website; they should make their websites more efficient. There are some websites you try to open and they will not, you click a link it doesn't not open. Some of the websites are complex; not user-friendly. When you open them, you have to study and diagnose them first, understand the pattern before you can navigate. Also, I don't think I have ever got my comment published on newspaper website despite my efforts to write. I only get my comment published when I read materials and write on Facebook and WhatsApp, but certainly not on newspaper websites.

**Discussant 9:** Some of the newspapers should work on the aesthetic look of their websites. This will make them catchier. To me, I also need them to be credible and timely.

Every newspaper should design their website in such a way that it is well partitioned so that every reader can easily locate his area of interest. They should have columns for politics, news, sports just like you have with hardcopies. Some newspapers don't design their own that way; they don't organise their contents that way. Also, the newspapers that post just one or two paragraphs and says that details will come shortly should do well to upload such details so that whoever that accesses that website will get the details of such information.

**Discussant 7:** I think they also need to improve on the platforms they explore. They also need to be more interactive with readers. One major deficiency newspapers in Nigeria have is in the area of interactivity. They have not started interacting with their readers.

**Moderator:** In view of your experience as a reader, is hardcopy still relevant? Would you say that newspapers should continue to give us hardcopy? Should hardcopies remain?

**Discussant 8:** Print media should still be. It is very much relevant to me.

**Discussant 10:** I think we cannot totally remove the hardcopy. For me, it is still very relevant. Relevant in the sense that people still make use of these hardcopies for their research, advertisers still make use of them. I think it is still very very relevant in society.

**Discussant 7:** The truth of the matter is that (hardcopy) newspaper is more like a vestige that should have gone moribund by now. It is no longer relevant.

**Discussant 9:** To me online newspaper without the hardcopy is like a train without engine. To me, the hardcopy is still very relevant.

**Moderator:** Has the online experience affected the extent you might want to buy or read physical newspaper?

**Discussant 7:** Of course, it has affected it considering the fact that we are even seeing a lot of media houses going online abandoning their hardcopy because of the cost implication. So, to me, the online (experience) has diminished, for me and a good number of the populace, the need for hardcopy. This is for convenience reasons, for economic reasons and more.

**Discussant 10:** Not at all. I still buy. Despite the fact that many newspapers are very effective online, I still read hardcopies.

**Discussant 8:** No it has not affected my desire to buy hardcopies. I still have love for the print... I just bought newspaper yesterday.

**Discussant 11:** I buy newspaper when I have the money. The online thing has had considerable influence on my tendency to buy but the influence is not absolute. It is not to a large extent.

**Moderator:** Thanks friends for participating in this session.

### 3.

**Group Designation:** Group 3

**Location:** Rivers State (Port Harcourt), South-South Nigeria

**Date:** January 18, 2019

**Time:** 1.35pm

**Moderator:** Can we describe our newspaper reading habit?

**Discussant 13:** I am regularly here. I buy three or four times a week. I come here to read almost every day.

**Discussant 14:** I read newspapers once in a week but I don't buy. I read mostly on the Internet. I only read hardcopies once a week mostly on weekends when I come to newsstands. I don't purchase newspaper copies.

**Discussant 15:** Well, reading newspapers is good. I buy hardcopies three times in a week. I read hardcopies regularly.

**Discussant 16:** As events unfold especially this time of politics, everybody wants to follow. I like to follow so I read on a regular basis. I buy once in a while when the news attracts me. I buy once in a week on the average

**Discussant 17:** I don't buy newspapers regularly. I buy twice or once in a month. But I read often.

**Moderator:** Can we share our attitude to online newspapers, are we inclined to reading them or are...?

**Discussant 13:** I don't read online especially because of the nature of my job. I am a commercial driver. I only read hardcopy.

**Discussant 14:** I read newspapers online everyday especially early in the morning around 3am when the network is good. Online newspaper is cheaper to read. I don't have to transport myself here to read. I don't buy data I read it through Facebook. Airtel Facebook is free.

**Discussant 15:** Reading newspaper online is good. Sometimes when you have data you read online. But in Nigeria, the network can zap off your data. Its good but not everybody can access data. I read online but prefer hardcopy because it is not every time that one buys it. You may buy it when you don't have data, for instance.

**Discussant 16:** I don't read online due to time. I am very occupied. I read newspapers when I'm in transit like this.

**Discussant 17:** I read online every day.

**Discussant 18:** Well, as at last year, towards the end of last year, I cultivated the habit of buying newspaper everyday but due to the way the economy is nose-



diving, I stopped. Now I come here to read but don't buy and at times I read online. I now buy once in a while like Mondays and Fridays. Bad enough, just like my attitude towards the hardcopy newspaper, I don't make comments when I read online. I also do not send my private reports for the newspapers to publish. But I feel it is important that I do that.

**Moderator:** Can we compare our attitude to hardcopy and online newspaper?

**Discussant 14:** I get breaking news anytime from Internet newspaper without spending.

**Discussant 15:** Reading online gives you breaking news before you get to the hardcopy. Online I look at headlines. But through hardcopy I read in details. Data involvement is my handicap.

**Discussant 17:** It's free. Though you buy data, the data also serves for other things. Online newspaper is better because you can stay in your house and read. It is more convenient.

**Discussant 18:** When you buy hardcopy, you can keep it for reference purposes. Sometimes, if you get it online and you go back you may not find it. But if you have it on hardcopy you can keep it for the future. I like reading online also because it gives me information quickly. But such may not be genuine, so reading it in hardcopy may be better sometimes.

**Moderator:** Can we now say generally that the Internet technology has helped Nigerian newspapers to improve on their delivery to the audience?

**Discussant 13:** It brings news quickly to you. You don't have to come here to read. You read before the paper comes to newsstands.

**Discussant 14:** Yes, the newspapers can now give us news without us having to go to newsstands. We get breaking news wherever we are.

**Discussant 16:** The Internet has helped. You see news pop on your phone. The headline may help their marketing because if I see the headline I may rush to go and buy.

**Discussant 17:** I am not satisfied with the speed of the regular newspapers. They need to be at par with the bloggers. I am satisfied with the online newspapers because they are fast. However, for the details, physical newspapers may prove the better option.

**Discussant 18:** Yes because some people may not have the money for a hardcopy. They may simply recharge their phone with 100 naira to buy data.

**Moderator:** But do you think that there are areas requiring improvement, where they can do more to provide better reading experience?

**Discussant 15:** They can help in bringing news faster.

**Discussant 16:** Internet and hardcopy can work together to give us a better experience.

**Discussant 17:** By reserving details of the news, Internet helps to improve hardcopy.

**Discussant 18:** Sometimes they don't report news on time. Sometimes before publishing it, social media would have circulated it, giving people wrong information. They are not really catching up sometimes.

**Moderator:** In view of your experience as a reader, is hardcopy still relevant, would you say that newspapers should continue to give us hardcopy, should hardcopies remain?

**Discussant 13:** Yes they should keep on publishing the hardcopy. It is not everybody that has Internet access. Somebody like me does not have Internet access.

**Discussant 14:** The newspapers should go online entirely. People who are not online should try to get connected.

**Discussant 15:** Yes I would advise that they should continue with hardcopies and also the Internet version. It is not everybody that has the tool to go online and because of the cost implication of going online.

**Discussant 16:** In Nigeria our awareness of Internet has not got to the level where newspapers should stop printing hardcopies. They should go on. The major stakeholders come here to read.

**Discussant 17:** There are some people who do not have access to data. Some people in Nigeria do not have Internet. I would not suggest that they should completely remove the hardcopy.

**Discussant 18:** They should still go on (with publishing). Even in developing countries, they still publish hardcopies.

**Moderator:** Has the online experience affected the extent you might want to buy or read physical newspaper?

**Discussant 14:** Maybe it has affected my desire to buy newspapers because reading online helps me to save.

**Discussant 15:** You can stay in your house and read without having to go out. You can call people around you to join you in conversation. There is delay with

hardcopy. You can read news today online but would have to wait till tomorrow for the hardcopy to publish it.

**Discussant 16:** Sometimes it affects, but not much because I am not always online.

**Discussant 17:** It has significantly affected me. I do not come here to read hardcopies as I used to do.

**Discussant 18:** Sometimes when you read online you are discouraged from buying hardcopies because you don't see the point anymore.

**Moderator:** Thanks friends for participating in this session.

#### 4.

**Group Designation:** Group 4

**Location:** Lagos State (Ikeja), South-West Nigeria

**Date:** January 22, 2019

**Time:** 11.45pm

**Moderator:** Can we describe our newspaper reading habit?

**Discussant 19:** The advent of social media has reduced my patronage of traditional newspaper. I read virtually everything I want to now via the Internet. I don't think I have bought hardcopy newspapers in the past two years. I only read if I am passing and may glance over the headlines. When I see a topic I like, I go online to read it.

**Discussant 20:** I am not so much attached to hardcopies as I used to be because I have my Internet and other electronic devices that I can actually get information from. I just go online to read. So it has been long I bought a hardcopy. I read hardcopies.

**Discussant 21:** I don't buy newspaper but since I do my business around here, I just come around to read sports newspapers. I don't buy since I am close to the seller. If I see the headline and like it, I just read sports.

**Discussant 24:** I don't read newspapers online; since my Android phone spoilt I don't read online anymore.

**Discussant 22:** I buy once in a while when the headline is attractive. But I buy sporting newspaper every day.

**Discussant 23:** I don't read hardcopies regularly and I don't buy them regularly.

**Moderator:** Can we share our attitude to online newspapers, are we inclined to reading them?

**Discussant 19:** I am not a particularly ardent newspaper reader. If I see a newsflash, I may go to the newspaper to search. I don't just come out to read.

**Discussant 20:** I read it often. I read minute to minute, second to second update.

**Discussant 22:** It's not all the time that I read online. I buy sporting papers always, but if I see attractive news in any of other newspapers I buy it. I read online, but if I don't have data, I don't bother myself.

**Discussant 23:** Every day I go online to read newspapers. It is a convenient way for me to read and know what is happening here and internationally.

**Moderator:** Can we compare our attitude to hardcopy and online newspaper?

**Discussant 19:** Online newspaper is handy; you don't have to go outside looking for it. You just switch on your data and have it.

**Discussant 20:** They are almost the same, just that some columns and features you cannot find in the softcopy. But when it comes to getting minute by minute update, softcopy is better.

**Discussant 22:** I like reading physically because I find it more helpful in view of the data challenge. Once I have bought a copy, I can always go back to read it without having to bother about data availability.

**Discussant 23:** It is easier to read online. Before the hardcopies are on stands you get the news first. Sometimes what you see online you don't see it in the physical copies.

**Moderator:** As readers, how do we assess the Nigerian newspapers in terms of satisfactorily adopting the trend of online newspapering?

**Discussant 19:** I think the newspapers are there. They are doing fine. I think every hardcopy you see today, you can get the full version online. I think the social media are making it difficult for the newspapers... but I think the newspapers are more credible.



**Discussant 20:** I think Nigerian newspapers are improving. The global competitiveness of Nigerian newspapers is very commendable.

**Moderator:** Can we now say generally that the Internet technology has helped Nigerian newspapers to improve on their delivery to the audience?

**Discussant 19:** Internet has not helped. Personally, I don't give much attention to newspaper whether online or offline. I read more on social media and blogs. These platforms have tended to kill the zeal people have for newspaper. However, you don't know whether these stories are from reliable sources or not. Social media is stifling the voice of traditional media. The newspapers we see today are not different from what we saw in the past.

**Discussant 20:** It has not added anything to newspaper reading habit in Nigeria but you can get information as fast as possible.

**Discussant 22:** It has helped them. But with the Internet, the newspapers do not make much profit any longer because everybody is now on the internet. Once you can buy an Android phone, you can access newspapers online.

**Discussant 22:** Yes. Sometimes, like weekends, if you cannot come outside (to buy/read hardcopies) you can switch on your phone and access the newspapers online if you have data. This is more convenient. Also you might want to read a

particular publication, say *The Guardian*, and the vendors around you may not have it, so you would rely on your phone to access it.

**Discussant 23:** Yes because accessibility is better with the Internet. You can just be in the comfort of your home to read without having to leave your house.

**Moderator:** But do you think that there are areas requiring improvement; where they can do more to provide better reading experience?

**Discussant 19:** I think the only thing they should keep doing is to improve on their news content in terms of truth so as to give them advantage over social media.

**Discussant 20:** There is always room for improvement. The graphics, they need to make it to be more attractive, so that it can attract the reader.

**Discussant 21:** We want quality news and not fake news. This happens both online and off-line, especially online.

**Discussant 22:** When I don't have data it is impossible to read.

**Discussant 22:** They should try to do the right thing on time. They should use the Internet to improve their speed on news delivery.

**Discussant 23:** It will help them get information as quickly as possible. On the Internet they report exactly what is going on.

**Moderator:** In view of your experience as a reader, is hardcopy still relevant; would you say that newspapers should continue to give us hardcopy; should hardcopies remain?

**Discussant 19:** They should still be publishing physical copies. Even though the Internet has made circulation of offline newspapers poor, they should still continue to publish because a lot of people still like it. There is also the question of how credible the Internet sources are.

**Discussant 20:** I think they should still continue because it is not everybody that has access to the Internet. I think the hardcopies are still relevant.

**Discussant 21:** I don't advise them to go online alone. Not all Nigerians can browse the Internet. Those who cannot go online can read hardcopies.

**Discussant 22:** Yes, they should continue to publish it. Because even in court of law, they use it (hardcopies as evidence). You can also keep it in your home for future reference. So, I would advise them to keep on printing.

**Discussant 23:** They can be publishing hardcopy because it is not everybody that has access to the Internet. Those who do not can come here and buy.

**Moderator:** Has the online experience affected the extent you might want to buy or read physical newspaper?

**Discussant 19:** Sure, to a very large extent. I know that in those days I used to buy newspapers once in a while, but nowadays, never. I will just switch on my data and read. Even if I don't have, I will just recharge.

**Discussant 20:** In terms of buying, it has actually affected it. It has been a long while since I bought a newspaper. The substitute for the money I used to buy newspapers is the money I use to buy data now.

**Discussant 21:** No it has not affected. I think it has not affected for some other persons as well because you see them buying hardcopies from vendors and this does not mean that they do not have Internet.

**Discussant 22:** Of course yes. It affects because once you go through papers via your phone, you don't need to buy hardcopies. When I read online, I don't buy anymore unless when I find something interesting such as job (advertisement).

**Discussant 23:** It has really affected. Formerly I used to buy newspapers. But now I sit in the comfort of my home or office and read all the newspapers I might want to read.

**Moderator:** Thanks friends for participating in this session.

Appendix IV: University Research Ethics Sub-Committee Approval for conduct of  
fieldwork.



P156D Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University  
111 Ren'ai Road, Dushu Lake Higher Education Town SIP  
Suzhou 215123,  
P.R. China.

26 March 2018

Dear **NELSON OBINNA OMENUGHA** ,

**Proposal Number:17-02-51**

**Title:**

**MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN THE NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER  
INDUSTRY**

Your application for Ethics Approval has been reviewed and approved by Chair's  
action. Please be advised that you would have to cite the proposal number in all future  
correspondence with the Research Ethics Committee about this project.

For reference, the latest version of the document 'Ethics in Research: Provisional  
Guidelines on Best Practice' is attached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Lynch", is written over the printed name.

Robert Lynch  
Chair, Research Ethics Committee

Appendix V: Confirmation emails from the Managing Directors/Editor-in-Chief of the  
selected newspapers.

1. The *Sun*

Re: PhD Research in Media Management: Request for  
Appointment

eric osagie <ericosagie@yahoo.com>

Sun 12/10/2017 2:05 PM

To: N Omenugha <N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn>;

Hello Mr Nelson Obinna Omenugha,  
Your email on the above subject refers.  
The dates suggested for your interested project are ok, all things being equal. Kindly update me on future developments.  
Many thanks,  
Eric Osagie

Sent from my iPhone

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## 2. The Nation

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**From:** victorifijeh [victorifijeh@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 10, 2017 8:01 AM  
**To:** N Omenugha  
**Subject:** Re: PhD Research in Media Management: Request for Appointment

Great. Consider it done. Discuss with our online editor Lekan Otunfodunrin. His email: lekanagency@yahoo. His no : 08023000621

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

Re: RE: PhD Research in Media Management: Request for Appointment

Lekan Fodunrin <lekanagency@yahoo.com>

Sun 12/17/2017 11:21 PM

To: N Omenugha <N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn>;

Dear Nelson,  
Apologies. I received your mail earlier but I thought I had responded. I been out of office on some travels outside the country but back now.  
Let me know when you will come. Preferably not Monday and Tuesday morning. Any day in the afternoon will be okay.  
Apologies again

Lekan Otunfodunrin

+2348023000621+2348023000621

+2348050498530+2348050498530

Twitter: @lotufodunrin

Skype: lekanskype

### 3. The *Daily Trust*

#### Re: PhD Research in Media Management: Request for Appointment

Kabiru Yusuf <yusufkabiru@yahoo.com>

Thu 12/21/2017 11:07 PM

To: N Omenugha <N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn>;

Cc: ifeidemili@gmail.com <ifeidemili@gmail.com>;

Dear N Omenugha,  
Thanks for choosing the Daily Trust for your research work. I have forwarded your request to our CEO/EIC who I believe can facilitate your work.  
Best regards,  
K A Yusuf.

Sent from my iPad

On 18 Dec 2017, at 11:18 PM, N Omenugha <[N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn](mailto:N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn)> wrote:

#### Re: PhD Research in Media Management: QUESTIONS

mannir dan-ali <mdanali@dailytrust.com>

Wed 5/23/2018 12:11 AM

To: N Omenugha <N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn>;

Dear Nelson Omenugha,  
I have gone through your list of questions for your research and am willing to answer the questions through an interview whether face to face or via some electronic means. I had initially thought I could provide written responses but realize that it will be impossible to give adequate responses without the effort turning into an examination for me.  
Let me know the date and time convenient to you and will consider subject to my own schedules.  
I look forward to the opportunity to help with your research.  
Best regards,  
Mannir Dan-Ali



#### 4. The *Daily Times*

### MEDIA MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

zh@foliomedialogroup.com

Thu 5/10/2018 7:58 PM

To: N Omenugha <N.Omenugha@xjtlu.edu.cn>; nomenugha@gmail.com <nomenugha@gmail.com>;

Hello Nelson,

My name is Zainab and I work with Mr Fidelis Anosike.

Mr Anosike forwarded me your recent email with regards to your research project and we think it sounds very interesting and we would be very happy to offer you any support we can. What is the aim of your research? Are you perhaps interested in exploring possible projections on how the newspaper industry can incorporate disruptive technology to reposition itself for the future?

Although I work at the group level (Folio Media Group), I can act as your point person to channel the questions you have to the appropriate persons and revert back to you with the responses rather than sending you many different contacts. So feel free to email me the questions you have.

With regards to your visit in December, if you send me a message at least a month before your arrival, I will work on scheduling meetings for you with the Daily Times management.

Once completed, we would also like a copy of your research to add to our library.

Kind regards

-----  
Zainab Haruna  
zh@foliomedialogroup.com  
Head of Innovations and Research  
Folio Media Group